The PASSING SHOW

No. 335 (New Series), Vol. 7. August 20, 1938

TWOPENCE

DIAMOND DELIRIUM
by Mario BALDI

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Make two dozen Rock Cakes for approximately 9d. See page 514

A delicious Birthday Cake for approximately 1s. 9d. See page 484

Steak and Kidney Pudding, for 6 people, 1s. 3d. See page 375

Nourishing Minced Meat Pudding for 4 people, for 9d. See page 242

How to make a grand Xmas Cake for 2s. 6d See page 484

Buck Rarebit, for 4 people, 6d. See page 360

All the family loves Jam Roly-Poly. A large one can be made for 6d. See page 410

Tomato and Potato Cake. Make a large one for 4 people for 6d. See page 232

Blackberry Turnover for 6 guests, for about 6d. See page 382

Bake two dozen Variety Buns for about 8d. See page 478

Toad in the Hole, without eggs, will cost approximately 10d. See page 224

Thick Green Pea Soup for 4 people will cost 5d. See page 101

Supper Pie, will cost about 10d. See page 378

Golden Pudding for 4 people for 9d. See page 409

A Large Custard, with only one egg, for 4 people for less than 7d. See page 578

Nourishing Fish and Potato Cakes for 4 people for 6d. See page 235

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Savoury Macaroni Pudding for 4 people for 7d. See page 240

Make a substantial Fruit Roll for 4 to 6 people for approximately 7d. See page 408

Wholemeal Cake, a large one for 6d. See page 500

Potato Girdle Cakes can be made for about 4d. See page 467

Semolina Custard for 6d. See page 579

Spinach Mould with Mushroom for 4 persons for about 10d. See page 330

How to make a Bakewell Tart for 4 people for only 3d. See page 388

New Fried Potatoes and Green Peas for 4 persons for 6d. See page 325

A big Raisin and Almond Pudding for 4 to 6 persons can be made for approximately 7d. See page 393

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Mutton Fillets for 4 people for 6d. See page 246

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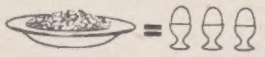

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The PASSING SHOW
No. 335 (New Series) Vol.7. AUGUST 20, 1938

YOU HAVE ONLY TO ASK

By some ironic twist of fate, it was the blind man they stoned in Porthryn who brought relief from their depression —and released the tortured Colley from the iron hand of righteousness

BY
ANTHONY RICHARDSON
ILLUSTRATED BY SINCLAIR CALOW

The hand caught him by the nape of the neck, and as she jerked him in his head hit the side of the door

ON the day that the blind man came into Porthryn by the eastern path over the hills, Mrs. Owen received the letter from second-cousin Roger. Colley met the blind man, his stick tapping the flinty surface of the road by the big slag heaps bordering the derelict works of Nicholson's.

Beyond the tall, black, broken chimney stacks, the snow clouds loomed purple and forbidding. The wind was cold and biting, and sang dismally through the dismantled stanchion and ruined buttresses of the old works in the Porthryn valley.

Colley heard the blind man coming, long before he saw him. The wind carried the sound of the stick, tap, tap, tap, before him. At first the tapping was faint, so that it might have been the drumming of a broken wire high aloft amid the iron bones of the factory's skeleton; then it grew louder, more insistent and a voice came singing, a man's voice deep, and melodious and full. Colley straightened himself up, crept round the slag heap and peered through a gap in the corrugated iron fencing into the road. The man stopped singing.

"Am I on the road for Porthryn?"

"Yes," said Colley.

"Is it far, lad?"

"A mile and no more."

Colley thought he looked tired. His dark, torn clothes were muddied and the hand that held the long, stout stick shook a little.

"You could sit awhile on the heap yonder," said Colley. "Better you take my arm, maybe. There's snags in the fencing."

Colley guided him through the gap and helped him to the heap.

"If you sit here," he said, "you'll be out of the wind."

"Eh?" said the blind man. "The bitter, bitter wind. Blow, blow thou winter wind thou art not so unkind as man's ingratitude. How old are you?"

"I'm eleven," said Colley stoutly.

"Eleven and a Porthryn man."

"I don't know so much about that," said Colley. "Aunt Hetty says—" He paused.

"Well, what does your Aunt Hetty say?"

"Aunt Hetty says I've not much claim to anything."

"She says that, does she?" said the blind man. "And what is it you would be claiming?"

"A name," said Colley. "It would make the sin less then, wouldn't it?"

"I see," said the blind man, "it's like that, is it? And is your Aunt Hetty a very religious woman?"

"She's very good," said Colley.

"Which permits her to point out to you how very bad you are."

"Yes," said Colley, surprised. "I expect that's just what it is."

"Aunt Hetty looks after me," he went on. "It's very kind of her. My mother died when I was born, that's what Aunt Hetty tells me. I've come here to find some coke, but there isn't any."

"And if you go back empty-handed——"

"Maybe I'll get a beating," said Colley, unconcernedly.

"Does that happen often?"

"Oh! quite often."

"And you cry?"

"I used to. But I don't now. It doesn't do any good and if you've done wrong you've got to be punished."

"I seem to have heard that before," said the blind man. "It's a funny business, this idea of punishment and reward. It doesn't fit in with the way I see things. I don't think *He* ever meant to suggest it. It was always a question of giving, with *Him*. Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find. It's really very simple. It's probably so simple that nobody ever troubles to think about it."

"Aunt Hetty is going to ask Cousin Roger about me," said Colley.

"Cousin Roger?"

"He's to pass through Porthryn and stay the night with us. He wrote to Aunt Hetty to-day. He's very rich and I've got to please him. He might take me away with him, if he likes me. He's got a farm in Devonshire. I like animals, do you?"

"Every sort of them," said the blind man, "especially the two-legged kind."

"Are you poor like us?" said Colley.

"Yes," said the blind man, 'and—no."

"You mean you've got money hidden away?"

"Not money," said the blind man.

He rose gingerly to his feet, while Colley propped his elbow.

"I'll be getting along," he said. "Maybe you'll be coming my way."

"Yes," said Colley.

They reached the roadside as the first fine flakes of snow began to fall. His bony hand rested on Colley's thin shoulder.

"When you're in trouble," he said, "you've only got to ask. Remember that." He tapped the road sharply with his stick. It was a challenging sort of sound. "But men get be-fogged with their troubles, and little blame to them for that. When do the lads march?"

"To-morrow," said Colley. 'Five hundred of them to see the king. You know all about that?"

"Indeed I do," said the blind man. His weight was quite heavy on Colley's shoulder as he walked. "They're to march from Porthryn to London town, the poor lads who've never seen a day's work. And hungry and footsore they'll reach Westminster,

(*please turn over*)

and footsore and hungry they'll march back."

Colley said good-bye to the blind man outside Mrs. Owen's garden gate. The gate creaked as it swung on its hinges by the broken palings and the garden was knee-high in weeds.

He stared anxiously at the cottage door, at the window with its strip of newspaper pasted across the crack. He was late and Aunt Hetty would be watching out for him. The blind man shivered and his hand fumbled at the collar of his coat.

"You're very cold," said Colley.

"Eh," said the blind man. "Cold as men's heart."

"I'll ask if you like," said Colley. "You said there was nothing like asking. If it's only a cup of tea, it's better than nothing. And I'll be whipped, anyway. She can but refuse."

"Very well," said the blind man.

The door was open before Colley was half-way up the path. In the dim recess of the doorway he could see the figure of Aunt Hetty. Her apron was a white blur and above it was the ghostly shape of her face.

Colley's teeth began to chatter. He stumbled up to the doorstep.

"He's blind," he said, "and he's had to walk and he's cold. That's why I'm late. And there wasn't any coke and he wants a cup of tea. Can he have a cup of tea, Aunt Hetty?"

She seemed to sway in the dark doorway, grow bigger. His heart shrank inside him, but he stood his ground.

"There wouldn't be any need to put milk in the tea. Just something to warm him."

From behind him, he could hear the blind man's stick tapping on the grit at the garden gate.

"There needn't be any sugar," said Colley and his voice was just a whisper. Then out of the darkness and the grey shape of her, came a hand. It caught him by the nape of the neck and the hard fingers closed round the sinews. His head hit the side of the door as she jerked him in, off his feet. Then the door slammed.

The blind man waited for several minutes beside the gate, his head on one side. His ears could tell him with far greater accuracy than any kind of eyes, what was happening beyond the grey stone walls. In a little time the sounds inside died away. They had been grossly unpleasant sounds to ears so sensitive as his. Then, his stick tapping, he passed down the road, with the snowflakes swirling round him.

The blind man walked through Colley's dreams all that night. Colley slept badly, because his back was sore where the strap had fallen, so heavily applied by Aunt Hetty. The sound of the blind man's stick tapped its way through one fantasy to another. Always Colley seemed to be following it, a will o' the wisp of sound leading him on, through valleys dark with fear and Aunt Hetty's hovering presence, over great mountainous heaps of slag with the red, angry light of a dawn breaking. Then, at last, the light seemed to grow clearer and his glutinous footsteps up the ever-shifting slag became firmer. As Colley stepped out more boldly, he heard the blind man cry in ringing tones—"Let there be Light!" and of a sudden the slag heaps fell thunderously, and where had been the black and sooty patches of ground, green grass appeared, and far ahead lay a little range of blue hills, mottled with green, and nearby stood a cherry tree, fragrant and glowing with blossom, and all the air was filled with the singing of birds and the lowing of sheep. And Colley shouted aloud for joy and woke himself up to see the morning light, grey and watery, filling his room and heard the desolate, steady drip, drip of the tap in the sink nearby.

He got out of bed cautiously, remembering his sore back, and crept to the scullery window and peered out. People were already moving about the Square, no doubt preparing to see the lads off on their hunger-march. It was six o'clock.

He dressed in his usual corner of the kitchen and splashed his face and hands with water. Then he put on the kettle, made tea and cut two slices from a half-loaf. One cup he carried upstairs to Mr. Llewellyn, who owned the house. Every morning he did this on Mrs. Owen's instructions. Mr. Llewellyn had money put by and it was Mrs. Owen's shrewd idea that such a small service must to a degree soften her landlord's heart and thus lessen his demands for a rent invariably overdue.

Mr. Llewellyn was still fast asleep. The shuttered room had a sour, acid smell and the look of Mr. Llewellyn in his bed was like that of a big pig which has had a fight with a pile of blankets and got throttled in the process. Colley, thinking on these lines stood watching him for a moment, then he put down the tea carefully by the side of the bed and said quite softly, "It's morning, Mr. Llewellyn." Mr. Llewellyn grunted and turned over in bed and made choking noises in his throat ; so, his task done, Colley fled.

The second cup of tea with the two slices of bread he carried into Mrs. Owen. She was awake, lying on her back, her eyes fixed on the cracked plaster of the ceiling. In the far corner of the room stood the big clothes basket, filled to the brim with the things she had collected yesterday, for to-day's work. She made no sign of recognition and her eyes never left the ceiling as he crossed and pulled down the half-blanket which served as a curtain. He tip-toed back towards the door and as he reached the door she spoke :

"Go to Sydney's shop and buy two pennyworth of cheese."

"Yes, Aunt Hetty," he whispered.

"And don't loiter on the way."

"No, Aunt Hetty."

"Let last night be a lesson to you."

"Yes, Aunt Hetty."

"When Cousin Roger comes to visit us he'll be seeking for a God-fearing boy not a little rascal of mischief and disobedience."

"And will he take me away, Aunt Hetty?"

She turned over on her side, then, her black eyes steady on him.

"Remember, Colley, if it hadn't been for me, you would have had no home."

"Yes, Aunt Hetty."

"I've tended you for all the sin that brought you on to this earth."

"Yes, Aunt Hetty."

"Now, go along to Sydney's and get the cheese."

The Square outside was bright with sunlight. Already the night's snow had been trampled by many feet into a grey slush and the Porthryn hunger-marchers were forming up in a rough column by the post office. Each man carried a pack upon his back and the leader of each section wore a rosette in his cap. A crowd of women, their shawls over their heads, pressed close to the ranks while children pushed against their skirts. Loitering by the kerb, Colley supposed that this was the first time he had seen all the people of Porthryn gathered together and how sad and grey, despite their attempts at cheering, they seemed. Then suddenly, there was a shouting and a commotion.

A motor car was making its way through the throng and a fat man in a tweed cap was standing up in the back. He was gesticulating and shouting over the heads of the crowd. Colley recognised him as the person who nearly always spoke in the Square of a Sunday afternoon and he remembered how once a great many policemen had come in from the big town of Llangelly nearby and formed a circle round the fat man, because the people were angry and had been throwing stones. Anyway, that seemed to be all forgotten now and the fat man seemed to be popular. He was speaking now and there was quiet amongst the crowd whose faces were all upturned to him. Colley could catch a few of the phrases, familiar tags which he had heard often before, but the discourse as a whole was lost on him. Anyway, the fat man's efforts seemed to meet with approval for there was a great deal of cheering when he finished and immediately after that the column of men began to shuffle their feet and wedge closer to one another.

And then, all of a sudden Colley saw the blind man. Before any of the leaders could shout an order or the bandsmen strike up, the blind man was at the head of the column, his stick raised aloft. His face was lifted up, his empty sockets turned to the sunlight. Then he spoke in a great voice which reached each corner of the Square.

He spoke rapidly but astonishingly clearly. Colley heard every word and he gazed with his mouth open and his eyes wide. For the blind man was telling the men of Porthryn that the march to London was a mad thing to do; that already other marchers had done the same thing and had been turned away.

The march would fail because the country as a whole had forgotten : and so they should abandon the march, for their fellow-men had deserted them and had no remembrance of them, and would forget them again. Only God would not forget, had never forgotten. They should lift their hearts to Heaven——

Then one of the young girls laughed, a high cackling sort of sound; and a young boy in the crowd catcalled and someone threw a stone. The leader of the band pushed the blind man roughly on one side, and a second later the column was marching forward to the mouth-organs playing "*Men of Harlech*."

The blind man stumbled and fell, but he staggered to his feet again and kept pace with the front files, still exhorting them, while the women and children, and the men too young to march flocked round the moving column, swinging across the Square and on to the main road to Llangelly. The blind man was with them still and because there was an awful fear for him in Colley's heart, he followed, too, forgetting Aunt Hetty and the twopence he still clutched in his hand.

Down the main road they streamed and now the women and children began to drop away as they reached the outskirts of Porthryn; but Colley noticed that the bigger boys were still keeping pace with the marchers and had gathered like a swarm of bees round the blind man, whose voice could still be heard above the band.

As the column passed the derelict works of Nicholson's, the band of boys deserted the marchers and turned, forming a solid wall between the blind man and the men of Porthryn. Colley quickened his pace till he was amongst the boys. The blind man was trying to find a loophole in the barrier, like a bird in a net, but as soon as he stepped one way his passage was promptly barred. Then the boys began to shout.

They called the blind man filthy names. He had sought to lay a curse upon their fathers who were marching forth for food and succour. They screamed their abuses upon the blind man in a vile way, shouting to him to leave Porthryn and never return. But still he held his ground, till, raising his stick, as if to cry again to Heaven, he struck a boy's head. Colley knew it was an accident and he yelled the fact out aloud and

His face was lifted up, his empty sockets turned to the sunlight. Then he spoke in a great voice which reached every corner of the square

received a cuff over the ear for his pains. Then, on a sudden and concerted moment the boys drew back, while the fellow who had been struck rubbed his forehead.

They drew back and Colley thought they looked like wolves and he began to whimper, because he was amongst them and could do nothing. Then one bent down and then another and the first stone whistled through the air. Like a phalanx the boys advanced, and the stones began to find their mark. The blind man groped wildly round, and Colley saw the blood was running down his cheek and dribbling off the end of his chin. Colley screamed because he was terrified, but no one seemed to hear him. He struggled to get out of the mob and reach the blind man's side, but the bodies all round him were pressing close and he could not get through.

The blind man started a shambling kind of running and his tormentors drove him before them. Several times he fell, till he blundered into the disused yard of the old factory. He was caught in a maze, then, between the piles of slag and the litter of stanchions on the ground. The pack drew back again, keeping their range with the well-flung stones. They drove the blind man, willy-nilly with well-directed volleys and he was like a fly struggling in a dreadful web. Then, from down the road sounded a police whistle and a shouting. It came again and the boys began to scatter, jumping the walls of Nicholson's yard and doubling out into the fields by the main road. Only four boys remained. One shouted to let the old fellow have a last round. The shower of stones fell as Colley ran forward.

He ran swiftly as the blind man was struck. He knew he must reach his friend's side, because the stick which was the blind man's eyes was no longer in his hand and nearby was the old well shaft. Colley called out.

"Here I am. I'm coming. I'm coming."

The blind man was groping wildly, his face blackened with the slag-dust and his own blood. He tottered to one side and the piece of rusted corrugated iron on which he trod, collapsed like tissue paper. The blind man flung his arms in the air and where he had stood but a second before was a black and yawning hole in the snowy yard of Nicholson's.

The first of the policemen found Colley at the edge of the well. The look on Colley's face scared the officer as much as anything else. The boy was as white as the snow that lay around that gaping mouth in the ground. And Colley's eyes were burning black with horror.

Down there," said Colley. "Down there. They drove him down with stones. Down there."

Then, he fell face forwards in the snow, screaming.

He was quiet when they carried him back to Mrs. Owen's. The serjeant took the strap out of her red hand and threw it across the kitchen. He laid Colley down on his couch by the sink.

"Let him rest," said the sergeant. "The boy saw death walking in Porthryn but quarter of an hour ago."

The marchers returned to Porthryn on the day that Mrs. Owen received the second letter from second-cousin Roger. The march had nearly proved a disaster. Quarrels had broken out among the leaders and the supplies promised at various halting-places beyond the valleys of Llangelly had not always been forthcoming. Rumours of heavy snowfalls ahead cooled the tempers of the hotheads who had demanded the demonstration at such a time of year. Then the news of the blind man's death reached the wavering column of sullen men and several said that the words of a prophet and a man of God had been flouted, though indeed, all that the blind man had said was but common sense. The hunger-marchers returned two days before Christmas.

The letter from Cousin Roger was brief and to the point. He had hoped to spend the night at Mrs. Owen's and see the boy, Colley, for whom he paid five shillings a week for keep and shelter, but matters of business must make him change his plans. An hour, snatched from his affairs in Llangelly, would be all that he could spare. It was sad news for Colley; good news for Mrs. Owen.

The failure of the Porthryn march had affected her. If the town had been poor before, now it was poverty-stricken. Where, in former times, she had called regularly with her clothes basket, now she would find the doors shut against her. The weekly five shillings from Cousin Roger was more important than ever. She was determined to hold on to that at all costs.

The frustration and jealousy of a past youth were still within her. Her sister's lover and betrayer still roused the pangs of unrequited love in herself. For her part she would, on Colley's birth, have turned the child away from her, a perpetual reminder of what might have been hers. Then Cousin Roger had stepped in with his five shillings a week and she had found in Colley an object on which to vent that spite which only bitter women know.

She read the letter to Colley and watched his face as he listened. He grew white and he blinked his eyes rapidly as if to keep back the tears.

"What are you crying for?" she said.

"I'm not crying," said Colley.

"Ingratitude for all I've done for you."

He said nothing.

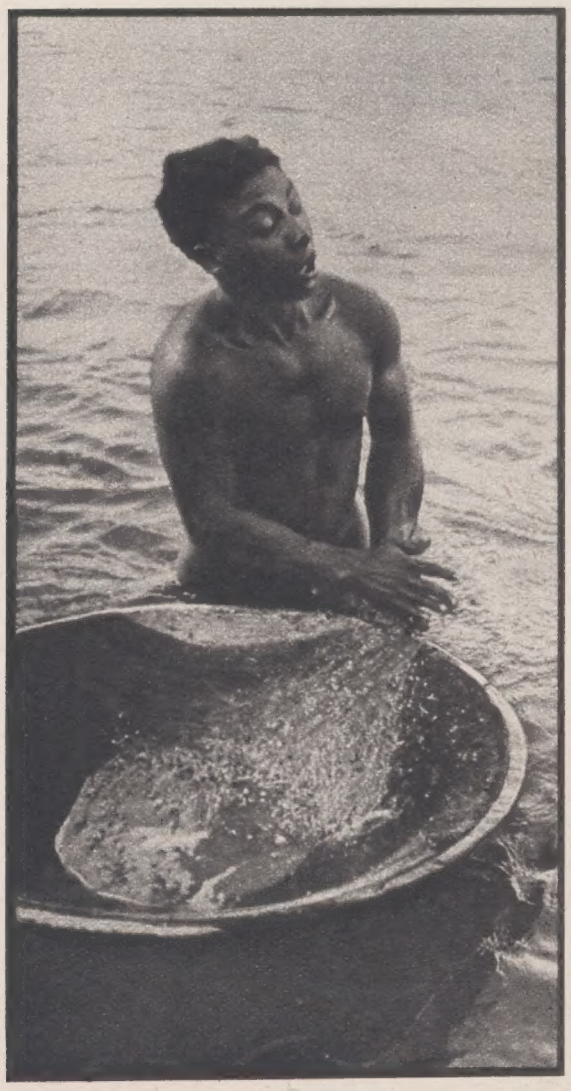
"One day you'll be sorry for your behaviour. But when Cousin Roger comes you're to look like the smart, happy boy you should be, and don't forget."

(*please turn to page* 31)

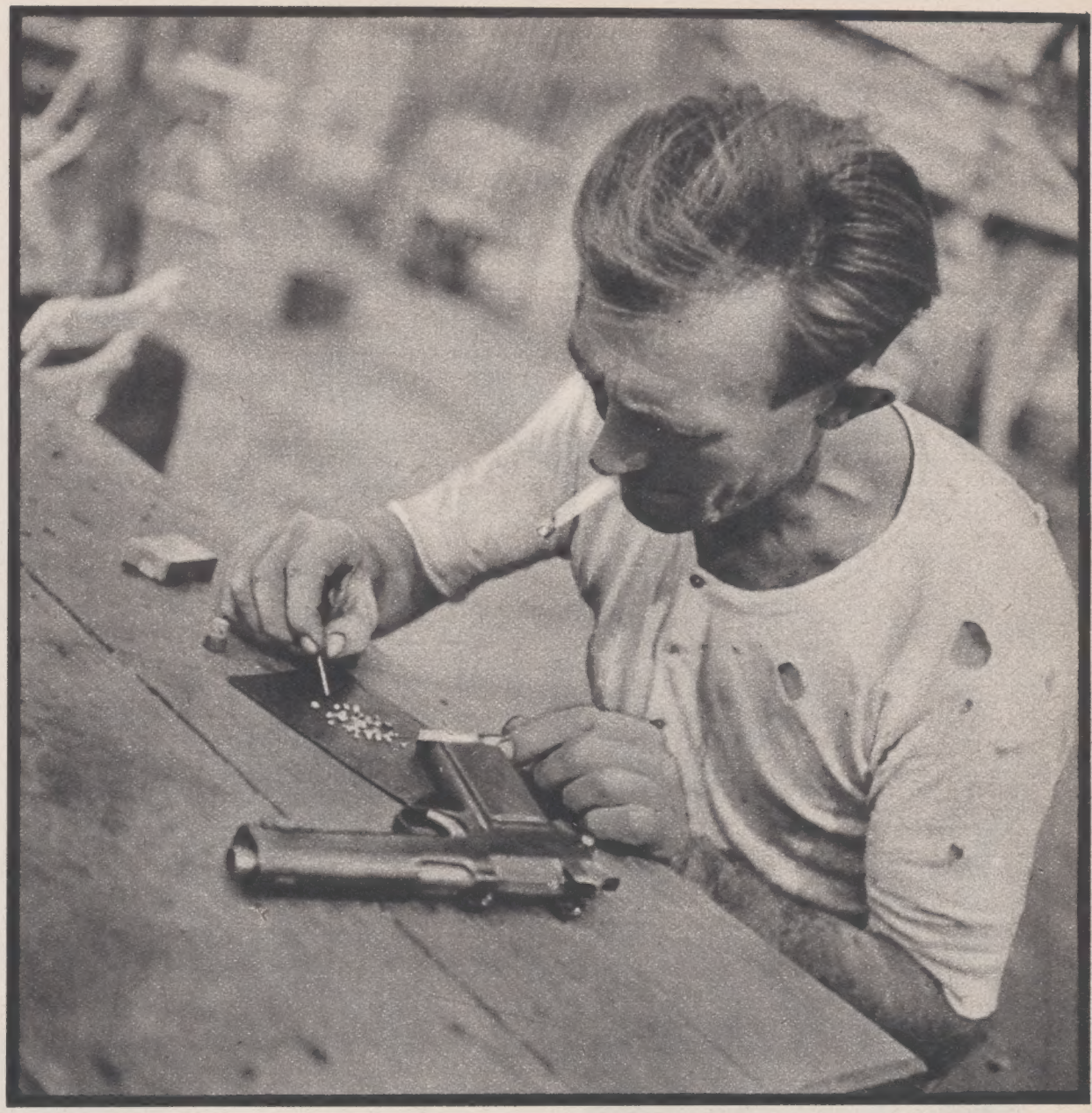
DIAMOND DELIRIUM

Through the wilds of central South America roves a restless army of men drawn from all parts of the world, but possessed of a single purpose. Diamond delirium has them in its grips, and they gladly face hardships and death in the hope of finding the stone that will bring them riches and comfort

BY MARIO BALDI



The "garimpeiros," or diamond washers, carry on their back-breaking and health-destroying work in cold water with a tropical sun beating down on their backs, but they all keep on digging, panning and washing in the hope of finding a diamond larger than the "Grand Mogul" and brighter than the "Koh-i-Noor"



In the centre of the district are the buyers' officers, and to these the washers take their shining stones and, with the money received, celebrate wildly

WITH my own eyes I have seen them, the victims of the diamond delirium. For months I have strolled through out-of-the-way places, in the centre of the vast South American continent, in the region of the Rio das Garcas, called Rio das Mortes—the " River of the Dead," watching the " Garimpeiros," diamond washers, working singly or in pairs.

I would meet them on their way through the inhospitable Sertao (the barren bush country,) a poncho on their shoulders, a knife and a revolver in their belt, carrying an old tin can, a cut stick and a little food. In their eyes was the penetrating glow of restlessness.

"Where are you going?" I would ask. The answer was always the same :

"To the Rio das Garcas."

But when I ask : "Where are you from?" the answers are like the index to a gazetteer.

Some come from the north-east, from Goyaz into the Matto Grosso through the states of Marabao, Bahia and Ceara; many come from the South, from Parana, Sao Paulo, even from the Rio Grande. Imagine the distances that these men travel,as far as from Rome to Berlin, from Madrid to Paris, from Zurich to Bucharest, all covered by foot in tropical heat and icy rainstorms.

Bare-footed they rush hundreds of miles across hills, plains, through swamps, rivers, mountain passes, virgin forests and deep sand, always with hammering hearts and flickering eyes, their dream of desire hovering before them like a will-o'-the-wisp, helping them again and again to bear all privations. For they all hope to find the legendary "Abacaxi Grande" (the big pineapple), the giant diamond which haunts every fever-tortured brain.

They dream of a diamond larger than the "Grand Mogul" and brighter than the "Koh-i-Noor."

And they are to be found in small co-operative plots along the fast-flowing rivers or in larger groups of several hundreds. I have even seen a camp where two or three thousand of them were working.

They live in quickly erected "panchos" with bamboo walls and roofs of palm leaves or grass. The door is a rug or a tent sheet and the pancho will usually hold only one person. When the rug is down it means that the owner is out and no one should enter.

And there is honesty among the "garimpeiros," for when the hut is left, even though there may be weapons or even diamonds about, they will rarely be touched.

These men are members of one family, though they come from all parts of the globe. White, yellow or brown men, they come from Brazil, Spain, Portugal, Germany, England and Italy. Yet if there were a robbery in their village they would rise as one man and hunt the culprit over rivers and over mountains, even to the big cities themselves.

The furniture of the panchos is as primitive as the life itself. There are hammocks, cooking utensils, tools and weapons, with boxes serving as tables and chairs.

Galley slaves had an easy time by comparison with these diamond workers. River banks are dug away and layers of sand 30 to 50 ft. deep are removed before they strike the "cascalto," which is the rubble stone containing the diamonds. Months are spent digging out the beds of rivers before this diamond-bearing rubble is reached.

In primitive diving suits, the divers (the "escaphandristas") descend 30 ft. below the surface to bring up sacks of cascalto. Sometimes, in rapid waters, they will be trapped in large caves where the pressure of the water is so great that they cannot return. And they die miserably.

Eventually the washing of the "cascalto" begins. For this purpose they use a "bateria," a large, not very shallow,wooden dish into which the cascalto is placed with water and rotated beneath the surface of the river. After a time all the rough rubble will go by centrifugal force over the edge of the bowl, and eventually all that will remain will be a handful of fine sand in which—it is feverishly hoped—there will rest a few small diamonds.

The bateria is made out of a light, non-splintering wood having the peculiar quality that it will not absorb water and so add to its weight under water.

The washing is strenuous work. A man will stand naked in icy water, while the sun beats on his back, scorching it until the skin peels off.

The dish may be filled a hundred times, washed out and filled again. And this work goes on for weeks, for months, until perhaps a glint on the bottom of the bowl tells the seeker that a prize of some value is the reward for his labour.

If the "cascalto" is some distance from the water, channels have to be cut from a nearby rivulet or the "cascalto" transported by oxen-cart or mule, or even on the heads of the washers, in tins to the river.

The work of the "garimpeiros" is always back-breaking and health-destroying. Having their bodies half immersed in the cold water while standing in the scorching sun causes them all to suffer the pangs of rheumatism. And often disease will be brought by a newcomer. Small-pox, a common complaint, frequently ravages a whole camp, and as doctors are few and far between in these districts men just wait for death.

The food leaves much to be desired. It consists mainly of dried meat and mandiore flour, which is not only hard to digest, but also becomes nearly as dangerous as poison under the hot, tropical sun. But no one will stop to grow vegetables or fruit. The energies of all must go to the finding of diamonds.

When, after many months of futile labour, a diamond is found, yells of delight penetrate the forests and revolvers are fired to announce the news. Another lucky man makes off to the nearest village to sell his prize to the buyers congregating there.

When money jingles in the pockets of the washers the time has come for festivity. From bar to bar they go, drinking, smoking and eating good food, recklessly gambling and finding amusement. The gaiety goes on through the night and rockets are fired to add to the noise.

Transport difficulties make the cost of even a bottle of beer about five times more than in the civilised world, yet champagne, expensive wines and liqueurs are consumed to help to forget the hard days that preceded the lucky find. And then one morning they wake up—penniless.

Gradually they go back to start at the beginning again. Frequently it even means borrowing to get their tools to make the fresh start. But what do these men care? For he who has had the Diamond Delirium is never cured. It creeps like a poison through body and soul. It rules the brain.

To reach this highly interesting district of the Rio das Garcas, three ways were open to me. One lead by train from Sao Paulo to Uberlandia in the Union State of Minas Geraes, and thence by car through the entire state of Goyaz up to the sources of the Rio Araguaya near St. Rita.

From there the route led farther up the north side of the Matto Grosso up to the Garcas river.

If all goes well, the journey takes about twelve days. Then one can take the Brazil train from Sao Paulo for four days to Cuyaba, capital of Matto Grosso, and from there by car for six days to the Garcas river.

By train, car and boat this journey will take sixteen days in the most favourable circumstances. I decided to travel one and a half days by train to Tres Lagoas, near to the point where the north-east train crosses the Parana river, and from there for about five days by lorry northwards to the Garcas river. But instead of five days it took twenty-one days to do that part of the journey. Three times did the lorry, fully loaded to its three-ton capacity, turn over. But what else could we expect? This was the beginning of the rainy season and the roads through the Sertao, the deserted hinterland, were almost entirely washed away.

I covered the same route later in a motor-car during the dry season in five days, but I was carrying no load except a chauffeur and a companion, a film camera and 9,000 feet of film.

These so-called "roads" through the Sertao were, in reality, merely ruts through the pampas grass, with no foundations.

In the far distances as one passes one may see a fazenda, farmstead, or ranchos (clay huts roofed with palm tree leaves,) belonging to the inhabitants of the virgin forest.

Bridges are almost non-existent and those one does meet with are for the most part the so-called mata-burros, heavy, saw-cut, giant, forest trees put side by side to the width of a track over small rivers and crevices on the route. They are just bound together to prevent their rolling away.

"Drive on and put your faith in God" is the only advice to be given in the navigation of these dangerous constructions.

The drivers are good fellows, revealing the same good humour in swamp, jungle, dust or rain and thinking no more of taking a three and a half ton lorry to the Garimpo than a London taximan would of taking a merry west-end bottle party home to Sussex.

In their modesty they are quite unaware of any heroism in their work, but somewhere in sun-flooded Rio de Janeiro there should be a monument to an unknown chauffeur, just as in Europe the nations have set up memorials to the Unknown Soldier.

And now for the people at the Rio das Garcas. These are the people I am to live with. I make friends with the lorry drivers, the garimpeiros, the diamond sellers and a few "big noises" on whom the prosperity or poverty of the district finally depends.

There are old, superstitious seekers for diamonds, who will leave gold grains behind should they find them while washing the waters, believing that they will never find diamonds if they take the gold.

A diver on the Araguaya river was exploring one of the underground river caves when the pressure of the water overpowered him and as his strength left him, he fainted. His comrades, receiving no signals on the line, sent another diver down who succeeded, after an arduous struggle, in bringing him to the surface and, after much artificial respiration, they brought him to.

In his tightly closed fist, embedded in sand and clay, lay a diamond which he sold for 8,000 milreis. He then took a 1,000-milreis note, rolled it into a wad, placed it in his revolver, and fired it into the Araguaya as a thank-offering to the river god, who had released him.

When I met the famous "engineer," Morbeck, "Garimpeiro King" of the district for about ten years, I found him to be one of those audacious, energetic and intelligent creatures who are to be found only in the *Sertao brutto* and, had they lived in the Middle Ages, would have become world-famous Conquistadors.

Morbeck has attained political power and tremendous influence over the diamond seekers. Under him they took up arms against the other capitalists who tried to get influence up there, even fighting open battles for their beloved leader against Government soldiers.

Once I arrived with Pater Caesar, a Salesian missionary, in a hut where we were to spend the night. The proprietor, living there with his pretty mulatto wife and three children, immediately asked the Pater to perform the marriage service.

This was not at all surprising because the district is so sparsely populated and the number of missionaries so small, that they are able to read only one mass a year in each village and to arrange marriages and confessions and to give a few lessons.

We held the marriage service and then the settler said: "Now I hope that I am really the official husband of my Maria, for this is my third wedding with her."

To our surprised questions he said: "The first one who wed us was a Baptist missionary but we are Roman Catholics. The second who passed and blessed us was Catholic, but we found out that he was not a real priest and we were glad when you called, for we have known of you for the last two years."

Then there is the post-office car which rushes through the district once a month, collecting the mail and sometimes even delivering some post. If it does not rain unceasingly, papers and printed matter come to Garimpo. But when rain falls for weeks the drivers must cook their food and heat their coffee on a fire of newspapers.

So you have had a glimpse of life in the Garimpo, where civilisation ends and the unknown starts. Here people work and hope, following partly their own rules and partly the need of the moment. In spite of their toughness, these admirable and sympathetic people are the pioneers of blossoming Brazil. Step by step they are moving into the interior of the continent. Behind them comes an ambitious nation who will fight for each foot of ground which they develop.

Where there is no small river the cascalto is carried in tin cans to an artificial watering place to be washed in the bateria

The author rests in a garimpeiro hut. In this district everyone sleeps in a hammock and all are decorated, some magnificently and expensively

THE HIDDEN JU-JU

Even as they seated themselves and drew their plates towards them, they were startled by a noise from outside, a thumping of fists on the locked door. "Who is that?" demanded Rusty, without, however, unlocking the door.

THE shadows lengthened in Sacred Valley, a faint breeze rustled through the Jackaranda trees, sending on the air a drift of petals from the blue blossoms. It was the hour when the men returned from their labours and the women were busy with their cooking pots. But on this evening there was none of the usual bustle and shrill, incessant chatter. The village was practically deserted; the great conference hall was filled to overflowing, for the Chief of the Mtangulizi had called his people together to listen to an important announcement.

It concerned the white people who had caused such a turmoil in Sacred Valley from the first moment of their appearance. Ever since the day of the ballot and what was regarded as the "miracle" of the faded crosses on the voting papers, coinciding with the disappearance of the sacred Ju-ju, the people had been restless, uneasy and suspicious. They had been baulked of the great sacrificial ceremony for which they had been preparing for weeks. The sacred Ju-ju, which had been restored to them by the white woman from a far-off land, had disappeared again. Its return had been regarded as a good omen, and they had rejoiced accordingly. Now they feared that the gods might visit them in their wrath because they had not made the fitting sacrifice of human blood to the Ju-ju.

The Chief was well acquainted with this new mood of his people; he was aware of their discontent and fears, their murmurs against the white people. The latter were in considerable danger, but now he wished to prevent their unpremeditated slaughter. Even more than the anger of his people did the Chief fear the mysterious gods of the white man who could perform such miracles and had such strange, secret powers. Above all, they must be placated, or they might strike him down in their wrath.

He called the people to him and addressed them—not in the breezy slang which had been taught to them by the American, Rusty Brown, but in the flowery language of their own. He had seen to it that only the natives of Sacred Valley were present at this gathering.

"I wish to speak to you, my people, because I know of the trouble in your hearts," he said. "Content no longer sits upon your brow, you talk amongst yourselves, and are afraid. The full of the moon should have seen the greatest festival we have ever known, the most important sacrifice ever seen in the Ju-ju Temple. But what happened? The gods of the white man willed otherwise. Do not fear, however, that the gods of the white man will visit us with their wrath, send us blight to our crops and sickness to the people. He whom you know as the Boss, the Great White Master, Rusty Brown, has promised to intercede. He is making special offerings to his gods. But the conditions are that we must make homage to the white people. Their blood must not be spilt as sacrifice to our ju-jus. This we can promise and go our ways in peace."

As he spoke, the Chief raised his hand as if in benediction. The people were squatted on the floor, but not in obeisance, for they were not a servile race. A profound silence followed this speech, and on the faces of the listeners was a bewildered, thwarted look. Then one of their number stepped forward. He had been standing leaning against one of the pillars of the hall, his arms folded on his broad chest, his expression fierce and aloof. This was Mzingu, half-brother of the Chief, his mother being a serving maiden of such a humble order, that her offspring was not recognised in the council chamber of the Chief. In appearance he was more striking-looking than the ruler. . . . He was taller than any other man in the Valley, with handsome features, of an Egyptian cast, and the pale skin which confirmed Megan's belief that the Mtangulizi had amongst their ancestors those ancient Egyptians who came to work the soda lake in Magadi. Mzingu was both intelligent and crafty. Though pretending to be friendly with the Chief, he hated him bitterly, and for years he had secretly plotted to usurp his half-brother. With many of the people, too, he had a following that was disturbing to the Chief. Now, as he looked at Mzingu's face, he saw it boded ill for his plan. He knew that stubborn, ruthless look.

"We have heard your words, Chief," he said in his full, sonorous voice, "and I know I can reply for the people, for am I not of the people and nearer to their hearts than yourself?"

The Chief ignored this barbed thrust and waited in silence for Mzingu to continue.

"For years it was said that one day our sacred Ju-ju would be restored to us by a stranger from a far-off land. A white woman came to us, bearing it in her hand. We honoured her because she, of all

Even when the lost tribe of Mtangulizi insisted on treating that most amazing serving maid, the Cockney, Elizabeth, as a jungle goddess, her pert native philosophy did not desert her. And when it came to foiling her erstwhile native worshippers in their search for their tribe's sacred and revered Ju-ju, she certainly won "hands down"

BY FLORENCE A. KILPATRICK

ILLUSTRATED BY GILBERT WILKINSON

her race, had been chosen to bring to us the Sacred Ju-ju. It was foretold to us by our wise men that she should be further honoured by being the first sacrifice to the Sacred Ju-ju; her soul would then find peace in the world of everlasting happiness beyond the clouds. And what has happened? Although all this was foretold, doubts were raised in our mind . . . we were asked to make marks on paper if we agreed with this plan . . . although in our hearts we were all agreed. Then the Sacred Ju-ju vanished, so our rites could not be carried out."

"Would you make a mockery of the ceremony, Mzingu?" asked the grave voice of the Chief. "How could we proceed with the sacrificial rites when the object of our worship was not there?"

"In the name of the people I ask you to produce the Sacred Ju-ju."

"That I cannot do. The gods of the white man have removed it from the Temple."

A faint, cynical smile flitted over Mzingu's features. Unlike the rest of the tribe, he had a clear, deductive mind, and therefore was less superstitious.

"That I do not believe."

A little murmur of amazement came from all present. Eager, questioning faces were turned towards Mzingu in awe and admiration.

"Since you are so clever, perhaps you can tell us the secret hiding place of the Sacred Ju-ju," replied the Chief.

"If I knew, do you think I should not tell the news from one end of the valley to the other? Listen, and I will tell you what I believe. It is that this white woman, Elizabeth, whom we have honoured, has taken possession of our most Sacred Ju-ju. She, alone, knows where it is hidden."

A curious pallor seemed to creep beneath the olive skin of the Chief. Perhaps he, too, had had similar suspicions which he dared not voice. Fear of the wrath of the white man's gods had kept him silent.

"You speak idly, Mzingu, and because you hate the white people," he said sternly. "You have always hated them. You sought the destruction of the Boss, Rusty Brown, when first he came to the Valley. But for me, you would have destroyed him."

Mzingu, who had bitterly resented the power accorded to the white man, tightened his lips in anger. Never had he hated his half-brother so much as at that moment. But he did not intend, just then, to show his hand. At last the opportunity had come for him to assert himself before the people; if he succeeded in his plan, then he could overthrow the Chief and rule in his place. Forcing himself to smile, he shook his head.

"I have never hated the white people. But I do not think they should make a mockery of all the dwellers in Sacred Valley. We have built the Death huts, we have prepared the feast for the sacrifice, as the wise men in the past advised. Must all this be stopped . . . our vows forgotten?"

"The people wish to proceed without the Sacred Ju-ju?"

"No. That, too, would be a mockery. But we ask leave to search for the Ju-ju, which, I am certain, has never left Sacred Valley since it was returned to us."

"Why should you think the white woman, Elizabeth, has concealed it?"

"My reasons I will give you later. It is not wise to give one's secrets to the winds which can carry them to other ears. But you know that my wife, Lu-Lu, is the chief waiting maid of the white woman, Elizabeth."

Again a stir ran amongst the people. Many of them did not like Mzingu, who could be haughty and overbearing; but even these now looked at him with a new respect, anxious to give him a hearing. The Chief—like most rulers—sensed instinctively the changed attitude of the people. He knew that if he opposed Mzingu, he would be in peril. He spoke mildly, therefore and tolerantly, as he answered:

"You bring good news, Mzingu, and if what you say is true you shall be suitably rewarded. I will cause enquiries to be made, question this white woman and force her to tell me the truth."

"That is not enough, Chief," replied Mzingu boldly, aware that he had the approval of his hearers. "Give me the right to make the search . . . let all the people in the Valley take part in it, since the Sacred Ju-ju belongs to them all. And when it is discovered, let the sacrificial rites take place at once."

Uproar and excitement followed his words. The people sprang up, shouting, "Yes, Chief . . . the words of Mzingu are wise. He wishes to restore our Ju-ju . . . if it is still in Sacred Valley we will not rest until it is found."

The Chief raised his hand for silence. "And if you do not find it—you do not fear the anger of those powerful gods which the white man worships?"

"Why should they be more powerful than ours?" put in the crafty Mzingu. "Or do you wish to serve them rather than our own idols . . . the idols of our fathers?"

The Chief was aware that to protest further would be dangerous. He inclined his head. "It shall be exactly as you wish, my children."

Secretly Mzingu exulted. He had struck at the right moment, and felt that the plan he had in mind would not fail. He turned to the excited mass of people.

"You choose me to lead this search?"

"We choose you, Mzingu." It was like a mighty roar that swept up to the domed roof.

"You have done well. And if I fail, I know my punishment. But I shall not fail."

Without another word, the Chief unclasped from his right forearm the massive gold bracelet which bore the sign of the three-tongued flame. This he handed ceremoniously to Mzingu.

"With this I give you my authority to proceed."

With mock humility, Mzingu made obeisance and held out his massive forearm to receive the bracelet. Then he shook his head. "It is too small . . . I must wear it below the elbow," he said, delighted to demonstrate his superior stature. When the bracelet had been fastened, he added the formula, "With this bracelet I swear to carry out the orders of the Chief and the wishes of the people."

During the excitement and cheering that followed, a man who had been sitting on the fringe of the crowd, slipped out of the hall, unnoticed by the others. He looked troubled, for he was friendly towards the white people who had come to Sacred Valley, particularly Rusty Brown, who had saved his life. Heroic deeds were not peculiar to Rusty, and when on one occasion he had seen Kisika foundering in the river, having been seized with cramp, he had dived in and fetched him out, but cursed loudly because of the wetting he received, and cuffed Kisika for being a fool.

But Kisika had attached himself to Rusty prepared to serve him as long as he lived. Through him, Rusty learnt much of the spirit of the people in Sacred Valley; he knew of the present unrest, and Mzingu's determination to overthrow the Chief should an opportunity arise. Now Kisika made his way to the bungalow to inform him of the meeting which had just taken place.

The reason why not one of the white people—Netta, Henry, Megan and Rusty—had appeared at the meeting was a special one. It was Elizabeth who provided the occasion.

Now, when Elizabeth had first arrived, in such a brusque and unforeseen fashion, in Sacred Valley she had been completely swept away by the homage rendered to her. After the limitations of a life devoted to domestic service, it was admittedly somewhat dazzling to have her own serving maids, to sleep on a couch covered with the skins of the snow leopard and bathe in a black marble bath in water that was strewn with rose petals. She had revelled in this, and become for a time somewhat despotic and overbearing.

But eventually her sound commonsense prevailed, her Cockney humour asserted itself. She even grew bored with a life of inactivity. Often she yearned to be busy once more amongst her pots and pans, for her skill in cooking was undeniable. The exotic and unusual food served up by the natives did not appeal to her. She would look disdainfully at a dish of larks' tongues and peaches and murmur, "Lor, wot wouldn't I give just now for a well-fried steak and onions!" Cows and bulls being sacred, they were only slain as sacrifices in the Ju-ju Temple, afterwards being burnt. No dweller in the valley ever

(*please turn to page* 13)

NOW DEAF EARS CAN HEAR AGAIN

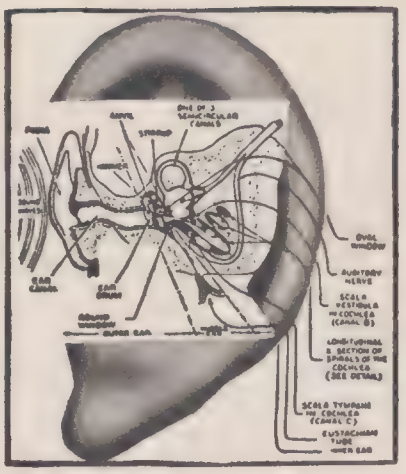


Diagram showing the intricate working of the ear.

Simply and Inconspicuously as Nature Intended ! !

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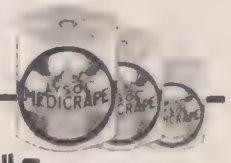

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ate the flesh, for it was against their religious beliefs.

"Seems to me a sinful waste," remarked Elizabeth one day. "Orl that good meat goin' to waste. Now, if only I could fix up a good porterhouse steak. . . ."

Porterhouse steak! A ripple ran through her audience, a half-suppressed sigh from Henry, Megan and Rusty Brown.

"I wonder if I shall ever taste that again," said Henry, rather sadly.

"If we're going to be sacrificed I shall order it on the morning of my execution," said Megan, but the others did not smile at this reminder of their perilous position, perhaps because they were unable to appreciate the curious humour of the Irishman.

"Well, if we carn't get the meat, it's no use 'opin' for a steak," said Elizabeth in her practical way. "But I've been thinkin' there's no 'arm in me cookin' some of the 'ome dishes in the way we've orl been used to."

Netta clapped her hands joyfully. "If only we could have a roast duck and apple sauce, Elizabeth, in the way you prepare it."

"W'y not, 'm? Ducks ain't sacred 'ere, anyway; for which we ought to be truly thankful. An' they got a root they calls kitoongoo, or some such nonsense, which looks uncommon like onions to me. So wot about me preparing a good old Union Jack dinner one evernin'?"

Rusty Brown shook his head. "If these native guys see you busy with the cookin' pots you won't cut much ice with them," he declared. "Kinda let you down, even though it is easy to see you ain't done nothing but domestic work in your own home town."

Elizabeth flushed and tossed her head. "You keep your remarks to yourself, sorcy. Or I might let meself go an' say *you* look as though you'd just been let outer gaol. But I wouldn't say that. No. They teach manners where I come from."

"Never mind about that now, Elizabeth," interposed Netta, who dreaded these wordy conflicts between the fiery Elizabeth and Rusty. "Perhaps you could cook us a meal in secret . . . here in Rusty's bungalow where there is privacy."

"It ain't easy to cook in secret when onions is on the menu," replied Elizabeth in tones of a philosopher voicing a profound truth. "But if you'd care to risk it, 'm. . . ."

"Of course we'll risk it," said Henry eagerly.

"I suppose there are no proper cooking utensils," began Netta doubtfully. Whereupon Elizabeth laughed.

"I got used to some strange cooking utensils since I left ole England," she said, "and these big, earthenware cookin' pots ain't too bad."

"But can you manage with the native oven?" enquired Netta.

The doubt in her voice touched Elizabeth's pride. She tossed her head.

"If these 'ere 'eathens can cook with ovens like that, then it shouldn't be 'ard for me," she retorted in a superior tone.

In this way did Elizabeth return to her former role of cook. Her operations were carried out in Rusty's bungalow in the evening after his servants had departed, according to their usual custom, to their own dwellings for the night. Everyone gave a hand towards the preparations. Henry and Megan built a fire inside the clay oven, then when it was red-hot, swept out the embers in readiness for the cooking pots. Netta often secretly marvelled to see Elizabeth the Cockney child of the pavements and civilisation, cooking in such primitive conditions, and with astonishing adaptiveness. Her especial pride was the enormous stock-pot, and she would never allow this to be emptied when traces of the meal were cleared away before Rusty's servants came in the morning.

"You can just tell 'em to keep their 'ands orf it," she advised Rusty. "To my mind, a stock-pot should never be emptied, but boiled up and added to every day. W'y I once knew a cook 'oo 'ad the same stock-pot going for twenty-five years . . . an' 'er soups and gravies was a treat. So if anyone touches my stock-pot, I ain't goin' to do no more cooking 'ere. See?"

Rusty recognised this as an ultimatum, and for once, respected Elizabeth's wishes. He admitted the excellence of her recipes.

"Though our American dishes knock spots off anything you can turn out in England," he declared.

"Then it's a pity you left Ameriker since they did you so proud," she replied with her usual spirit.

Perhaps it was this remark of Rusty's—or it may have been the yearning desire expressed by Henry and Megan—that turned Elizabeth's thoughts so often to the idea of preparing a porterhouse steak. Eventually she raised the point with Rusty.

"They're sacrificin' one o' their blessed, sacred bulls to-morrer . . . wot about gettin' a steak from the rump on the sly?"

"Say, what's the big idea . . . d'ye want me to be sacrificed next?" he grumbled. "You know these guys are bats about their religious beanos."

"Wot about that house-boy of yours, Kisika?" she demanded. "He orlways helps in the Temple on sacrifice days . . . he can get it for us as easy as winkin'."

"Say, that's an idea," said Rusty, who also hankered after the flesh pots. 'I'll have to tell him I want it for a little private sacrifice."

"That's right," agreed Elizabeth. "Tell 'im we got gods of our own wot likes the best cut from the sirloin, two inches thick."

"Kisika'll do most anything for me since I fished him outa the pond," pondered Rusty. "But it's a risk . . . if the native guys got wise to the idea that we're eating their sacred bull——"

"Course it's a risk. W'y we're risking our lives," interrupted Elizabeth briskly. "But when you've tasted my porterhouse steak, you'll say it's worth it."

Rusty grinned, driven to a grudging admiration of Elizabeth's ready tongue.

"Okay. I'll have a chin with Kisika right now."

Much to Elizabeth's satisfaction, her plan succeeded. Kisika, sworn to secrecy, procured a slab of meat which, if it was not exactly the right cut, would "do at a pinch," as Elizabeth expressed it.

So it happened that at the hour of the Chief's conference with Mzingu and his subjects, Netta, Henry, Megan and Rusty were gathered behind the closed doors of Rusty's bungalow while Elizabeth prepared the porterhouse steak for the evening meal.

And when at last it was set on the table, brown, oozing in rich juices, flanked by little onions, stuffed tomatoes, and crisp, fried potatoes; when Henry carefully divided it into five portions, and the red of its centre contrasting with the crisp, brown of its outside which proclaimed the excellence of its cooking, a solemn hush fell upon them all.

Yet even as they seated themselves and drew their plates towards them, they were startled by a noise from outside, a thumping of fists on the locked door. They sprang up.

"Who is that?" demanded Rusty, without, however, unlocking the door.

"It is Kisika, Boss . . . I gotta talk to you right now."

Misunderstanding the panic in Kisika's voice, Rusty returned to the table.

"It's Kisika. I guess they've found out about his pinching the meat from the Temple. Hell, but it's tough," he said with no intention of making a joke. "We'll have to put it outa sight right now . . . the fire's the best . . . quick. . . ."

"Burn it?" demanded Henry. He had paused with a red, juicy morsel impaled on the sharp native implement which did duty as a fork. "You mean we can't eat the porterhouse steak after all?"

"You said it. Now scram!"

There was a scuffle and scramble, the table was cleared within two minutes, and a sizzling sound came from the kitchen as five portions of porterhouse steak went to destruction in the flames. Then Rusty unlocked and flung open the door. Kisika rushed in and addressed them without ceremony.

And he had not come to speak of the robbery at the Temple after all! It was to tell them of the conference which had just taken place, and the power the Chief had now invested in Mzingu.

"He's a bad guy," said Kisika' shaking his head. 'He says the white people have hidden the Sacred Ju-ju. . . . Bully for you that ain't, or it's be the finish of you right now."

"Is he going to search?" asked Rusty.

"Yep. And he's starting in at this bungalow."

"What a hope. He'll not find it here."

"I just came to give you the lowdown, Boss. But I caint stay or I'll be in a mess myself."

Still breathless, Kisika darted away. The others looked at each other in consternation. Then Henry said:

"You must tell us, Elizabeth, where you have hidden the Ju-ju."

"I carn't do that, sir."

"But you must," urged Megan. "It's very necessary that we should know where it is."

"Seems to me, sir, that it's móre necessary you shouldn't."

"Nonsense, Elizabeth," put in Netta. "We shall have to put them off the scent."

"It's more likely to put them on the scent if I tell you orl where it is, 'm. I *'ave* read of savages torturin' folk to make them give up a secret. Now if you don't know the secret you carn't tell it."

The force of this reasoning, combined with the extremely obstinate angle of Elizabeth's jaw, silenced them; they saw it was useless to question her further.

But fear and anxiety were in their hearts as they waited for Mzingu to arrive. That Elizabeth had concealed the Ju-ju in her own apartments, they had no doubt, and with all her ingenuity it was not likely to remain hidden for long.

It was in Rusty's bungalow, however, that the search began. With murder in his heart, Rusty saw everything flung into indescribable disorder; when they left it was as if a hurricane had passed through the place. They next turned their attention to the derelict plane in which he had crashed in Sacred Valley. This search he supervised himself, swearing vengeance if they destroyed its structure, for under his direction the clever natives had repaired it, and it was an object of considerable awe throughout the tribe.

For an entire week the search continued. From time to time every member of the tribe took part. But as the days passed with no result, Mzingu began to look anxious, then afraid.

It was the Chief who ordered the search to cease. "This conduct is not seemly and will bring down on us the anger of the white man's gods," he said in an address to the people. "Mzingu has failed. He must receive his punishment."

In ignominy, and amidst the angry murmurings of the tribe, he returned the bracelet bearing the sign of the three-tongued flame. He was sentenced to a period of solitary confinement in the gruesome caves beyond the Ju-ju Temple. And for a time at least peace came to Sacred Valley.

But the ordeal had left its mark on Netta, Henry and Megan. Rusty had merely been raging with anger at the indignity, and Elizabeth had appeared to be apparently unruffled.

"I got one o' my good ideers, so there was no need to worry," she remarked.

"But now the danger seems to be over, won't you tell us where the Ju-ju is hidden?" pleaded Netta.

"I mighter's well tell you," she said hesitatingly.

"Not here," said Rusty, rising and leading the way indoors. "These native guys have a proverb that the wind has ears."

Elizabeth chuckled. "It is a bit of a joke . . . If you'll just come along with me, I'll show you."

Rusty caught her arm. "You ain't going to tell me that it was hidden in the bungalow after all?"

For answer Elizabeth walked into the kitchen. They followed her, wondering. She bent over the huge stock-pot which was even then simmering on the dying embers of the fire, stirred it carefully with a large spoon . . . then from its depths brought up a well-known object.

"The Ju-ju!" gasped Netta.

"Pity it wasn't made o' gold—then it might 'ave melted," said Elizabeth. "An' that night when I sor them orl nosin' about the kitchen, turnin' the place iggledy-piggledy, and the Ju-ju was there orl the time on the fire and a-simmerin' in the stock-pot, well it was all I could do to keep from larfin'."

"From *laughing*?" Rusty stared at her at first incredulously and then with a sort of awed admiration. "Gosh, you Britishers . . . well, you just about beat the band!"

Further stories in this series will appear shortly

"This is my country. Every man in it is my man—get out" said Neilson, and Bowden went. But he had his 'plane and Nielsen had a daughter and there is such a thing as a hostage. Read THE INEVITABLE by SEWELL PEASLEE WRIGHT

NEXT WEEK

THE FLYING YORKSHIREMAN

Sam Small, whose ancestor had words with Wellington at Waterloo over a fallen musket, is travelling the world with his wife and daughter, when he discovers in California that he can fly —and fly he does until the police catch him

BY ERIC KNIGHT

ILLUSTRATED BY CLIXBY WATSON

OF course, Mully heard about the whole thing. When she got home that afternoon the landlady rushed up with the news that the police had telephoned for her.

"For me?" Mully said, a little alarmed despite her free conscience. "What in the name o' goodness would they want wi' me?"

"Well, it seems sort of like they've got your mister down there."

"Ma Sammywell! Ooooah, fer the luv of Heaven! What in t' name o' goodness hez he been up to now!"

So hardly knowing whether she were standing on her head or her feet, Mully dashed around and got her best black gloves, and they put her in a taxicab and off she dashed for the City Hall at Fourth and Santa Monica Boulevard, all the time stewing and fuming and covered with shame as she pictured Sam a criminal and either locked up behind the bars or else sitting in a room with a white light in his face and six detectives, with their hats on and cigars in their teeth, giving him the Yankee Third Degree. By the time she reached the station she was about ready to write to the British Embassy and get the Grand Fleet over to California to see that a good British subject had his right defended.

She was in such a stew that it made her as mad as a setting hen when she walked in and found Sam sitting calmly in the station house, puffing on his pipe.

"You scallywag!" she cried. "And what's ta been up to now?"

"Now, Mully," Sam said. "Now, now!"

"Don't thee now-now me," she said. "What's ta been up to?"

Sam shut up in a regular stubborn Yorkshire way and wouldn't say anything, so the police lieutenant, who turned out to be a very affable sort of a lad, took Mully aside and explained that Sam had tried to commit suicide by jumping off the Ocean Drive cliff.

"Suicide?" Mully said. And then the big tears began rolling down her face and she dabbed and dabbed away.

"Now," the lieutenant said to Sam, "aren't you ashamed of yourself? Causing all this grief to your wife there! Aren't you ashamed?"

"Eigh, doan't scold him, mister," Mully begged. "Properly it's all ma fault. He's been feeling poorly ever since he had a touch of bronchitis i' Vancouver, and Ah haven't been a good wife and takken care on him like Ah should."

"Now, Mully," Sam comforted, "doan't thee tak on. Tha hez been a good wife—barring one or two little bits o' things, Ah couldn't ha' wished for no better wife."

"Well, what's tha want to goa and commit suicide for?" Mully wailed.

She was so overcome that the lieutenant invited them into his private office and sat down and wrote on a lot of papers. Then he frowned at Sam.

"Now, Mr. Small," he said, sternly. "I want to tell you something. Underneath this building we've got six cellars. And the farther down you go the darker it gets. And in each cellar there's sixty cells. And the farther along you go the smaller the cells get.

"Now, by rights I ought to take you down into the very bottom cellar, and take you right to the very last cell, and lock you in there, and then come up here and throw the key away! That's what I ought to do!"

"Oh, please," Mully begged. "Doan't do that. He's gate a tarrible poor chest. All his side of the family has. He'd dee o' pneumonia. Oh, please, just lock him oop in a varry nice cell where he can see a little daylight, in a manner o' speaking."

At this the lieutenant tapped his teeth with his pen, and looked at Mully and then scowled at Sam, and finally he said:

"Mrs. Small, I'm moved to compassion by your evident love for your husband. And don't think I'd do this if it wasn't for her," he snapped at Sam. "But just in this case, I'm going to take a chance. I shouldn't do it by rights, because I should put him away where the sun can't shine on him, but I'll take a chance and release him in your custody."

"Oh no," Mully said. "Ah wouldn't want to connive at owt wrong. If the law says he's got to go behind the bars, then tha'd better do that."

"No, I'll take the responsibility," the lieutenant said.

"Nay, now. Th' law's th' law," Mully insisted. "Hard on us as it may be, we maun observe it."

"Now, Mully," Sam said. "If t' policeman is off to let me goa, doan't thee upset t' applecart."

"Th' law's th' law," Mully said, stubbornly.

It took quite a while for the two of them to get Mully to give in, but finally she did.

"I'll take care of the law; you just take care of your husband," the lieutenant said. "Now remember," he said to Sam, "you're being released in her custody. Any more monkey business and the *very last cell* in the *very lowest cellar*! Now go home and behave yourself."

"Ah'll see he does," Mully said, wiping her eyes. "Coom on, Sammywell. And just wait till Ah gate thee hoam!"

Of course, for the next week or so Sam never heard the end of it. Mully kept her eye on him every minute of the waking day. He couldn't even take a walk alone. Naturally, he got very fed up with this.

"Ah'm no owd codger that can't tak' a walk alone," he would complain.

"That so be as it may," Mully would sniff. "But just the same, Ah'm off to keep an ee on thee."

This, of course, meant that she had to let Lavinia make the rounds of the studios alone. But, just to show how strange things happen, Lavinia seemed to get along much better and, before a week was up, she really had a screen test at G-M-G Pictures, and it looked as if the cinema were going to be interested in her after all.

The only thing, she said, that she thought was holding her back was what she called background.

Tha' means tha's ashamed o' me and thy feyther?" Mully challenged.

"Oh no. Nothing of the sort, Mother. I mean this place here."

"What's wrang wi' this place?" Mully asked. "Ah'm sewer there's no lord or duke or belted earl in all England's gate a kitchen that's any bonnier

He went over to where the road was near the slope of the canyon and took off. He did a turn or two over the canyon, circled over the edge of Rogers' ranch, glided back and came neatly to earth beside the reporter

looking. Indeed, Ah nivver thowt Ah'd live to t' day when a hed me a kitchen wi' yaller, black and white tiles coovering ivvery blessed inch o' t' walls."

"I know, Mother, but it's so small—and in what a neighbourhood ! We ought to have a home, not an apartment—a place where I could have a cocktail party and meet influential people and make contacts with directors and producers.

"Now I read that for two hundred and fifty dollars a month. . . ."

"How much is that i' pounds?" Sam asked.

"Fifty pounds a month," Lavinia calculated.

"Well, Ah'll be a moonkey's ooncle," Sam gasped.

"Sitha, ma fine lady," Mully added. "That's moor 'n us ivver paid in our lives for a whole year in a house. And if tha thinks that we got brass to chuck away on thy fancy ideas, well tha' just gate another think cooming."

At this Lavinia burst out bawling.

"Well, I don't know what you want to do with the rest of your lives, but I know what I want to do," she sobbed. "I don't know what Father ever wanted to invent the Small Self-Doffing Spindle for, and make a fortune out of it, if he just wants to go right on living like a mill-worker."

"We're not movin'," Mully stated flatly.

"Well, Mother, you might just look at the house I saw. It's not too grand. And it's got a beautiful garden where. . . ."

"Tha heeard what thy mother said !" said Sam. "We're not off to move."

"Well, there's no need to bark at t'lass like that," Mully said, turning on him. "Heavens knows she nobbut made a bit of a suggestion."

"Ah didn't bark at her," Sam said.

"Why tha did, fit to snap her yead off. Just because t' lass hes a desire to improve hersen. . . ."

"Hey, who's side is tha on i' this argument?" Sam demanded.

"Well, if tha's on one side Ah'm on t' other, for Ah nivver knew thee o' t' reight side i' ma life," Mully came back. "And onyhow, this place hez a gardin, and happen it'd dew thee good to do a bit o' digging. Tha could put in reddishes an' a few swedes and some leeks and a nice row or two o' lettis."

"Ooh, drat ma blasted buttons," Sam said. "Ah wish Ah were back hoam i' Yorksha' !"

And, of course, the upshot was, Mully and Lavinia got the nice big house.

It was up on Pacific Palisades, just beyond where Vicki Baum and Elissa Landi live, and it had orange trees and an avocado grove and a patio with a fountain and an automatic, self-sprinkling lawn all complete. It was quite a mansion.

Lavinia gave a party, complete with stuffed celery and influential people, and as luck would have it the conversation turned to flying. A transport plane had just crashed in San Francisco Bay, killing all the people aboard and everyone at Lavinia's party had a new idea about why it had happened.

"Nay, ye're all wrang," Sam put in. "Like as not the reason he crashed was because the air was wivvery."

"It was what?" asked a young woman with a cut-glass voice.

"It were wivvery," Sam said.

Everyone stopped talking and Sam, seeing he had his audience, expanded.

"It's ma own word," he said, "but Ah'll explain it to ye. Now sometimes the air is all nice and flat as you may wish. . . ."

"Oh, Father," Lavinia cut in, "wouldn't you like to put up the ping pong net for us?"

"I' just a minute," Sam said. "Now, there's other times, when it gets all reyther in mucky little bits, like. And that's what Ah calls wivvery. See now, supposing Ah'm an airyoplane."

He spreads his arms to show them. Everyone looked very amused and, truth to tell, Sam did look a bit of a comic figure, what with his arms spread and his grey head cocked on one side.

Mully saw them smiling and she began to boil over. She walked over and gave Sam a nudge that nearly buckled in a couple of ribs.

"Time for t' ping pong net, lad," she said, with emphasis, like a villain in the cinematographic pictures.

So Sam put up the net on the table in the patio, and all the influential people began batting the little ball around. For a while he watched the game, then he wandered uselessly round his fine, big house. He was feeling a bit sorry for himself, when one of the guests, a tall, likely-looking lad, came up.

"Mr. Small," he said. "My name's Harry Hanks."

"Ah'm that pleased to meet you," Sam said, dolefully.

"Mr. Small, I was interested in what you were saying about wivvery air. You were interrupted."

"Well," Sam said, "it's this way."

He began to stretch his arms again, but then he looked round to see if Mully were in sight.

"Come i' t' kitchen, lad," Sam said. "We're not so liable to be disturbed."

They got in the kitchen and Sam explained all about how the air got wivvery at times, and how of course a bird managed to stand it pretty well because its wings and feathers were pliable.

"But an airyoplane wings, tha sees, hes got no give to 'em," Sam explained. "Well, there tha is, lad. There's bits of air pushing up, and bits of it pushing dahn, and there's no give to the wing."

"Very interesting," the young man said. "Go on."

Encouraged by such a good listener Sam went on, pointing out how the wivvery air condition was especially bad some days just where the ocean air met the land air, and it was always worst of all about 4.30 in the afternoon when the shore breeze was setting in.

"Now we got this," Sam went on, marshalling his argument. "It were soa wivvery fower days agoa that the sea gulls was flying like they had the ague.

"The warst place to be is reight where the sea air meets the land air.

"The warst time to be there is about fower-thutty, when the breeze changes.

"And that's the day, the place and the time that this poor chap's plane drops smack i' t' ocean, ain't it?"

"Say, you're right at that," the young man said.

"Well, well," Sam smiled. "Here, it's dry wark talking. How abaht a nice bottle o' beer?"

The party was all over before Mully thought to look for Sam in the kitchen. The young man said he had to dash. Mully pursed her lips and waited till he'd gone. Then she stared at the six empty beer bottles.

"So ! Up to thy owd tricks again," she began.

Sam knew his Mully, so he escaped, and stayed away until dinner time. He had to go down for his

(*please turn over*)

meal, so he ate quietly while Mully and Lavinia sniffed and ignored him in the way women will when a man's in disgrace.

Finally, Lavinia broke into tears.

"Now, let's have noan o' that," Sam begged.

"How can the lass help it?" Mully started, glad to get into battle. "Goodness knaws we try and try to mak' summat of us-selves, and tha upsets t' applecart ivvery time. Showing off abaht things tha knaws nowt abaht—and salming up beer i' t' kitchen."

Sam began to lose his temper.

"Well, the lad were interested," Sam stormed. "All we did was sit there and tak' a little beer, and Ah explained to him a few things about flying."

At this Lavinia gave a yowl and covered her face with her hands.

"Now what hev Ah done?" Sam moaned.

"What hesn' ta done," Mully retorted. "This Mr. Harry Hanks is nobbut one o' t' biggest producers i' Hollywood, who were off to sign up our Vinnie. And on top o' that he's nobbut the avvyator that howds all t' records for speed and height and distance. That's all he is. And so thee, Mister Bighead, Sam Small, Esquire, hez to sit down and tell *him* all abaht flying."

"And now you've ruined my chance of getting a contract," Lavinia said. "He'll think I come from a family that's mad."

What with Mully and Vinnie going in relays, poor Sam had quite a time. It was getting worse and worse, until he stood up.

"Now hev done!" he thundered. "And that's an end to it."

So Mully and Vinnie sat quiet as mice and Sam stared at them.

"Now then," he said. "Ah'm off out for a walk—and what is more, Ah'm off to walk alone wi' no one watching ma."

He waited, but there was no contradiction. So out he stalked and clapped on his best derby hat, and away he went. Without knowing it exactly, he headed for the seashore. He strode to the palisade beneath the three kinds of palms and stared away out, high over the movie stars' shore palaces and the breaking waters half-seen in the twilight. He looked up the highway to where the lights shine at the Lighthouse Café. Then he turned, placed his hat neatly on the bench, walked back to the edge, and took off.

Out he plunged into the gentle updraught by the cliff face, and then with a swoop he soared high, high above the Santa Monica cañon. With the wild music of the air currents playing on his face, he zoomed and quartered, feeling the first ecstasy of outdoor flight.

He dove down into the cañon, above its blaze of neon lights where the hot dog stands and service stations clustered. The drive of his weight shot him over to the opposite mesa where he again picked up the lofting air on the cliff face. He quartered and tilted one arm and shot obliquely on the air column, up the beach toward Malibu.

At Malibu, where the cliff face ends and the hills are rolling, he hovered, balancing gently on the breeze. Then, suddenly depressing his feet, he plunged down, toward the lights, felt the earth rush at him gloriously as he headed toward it in an outside loop, felt his body race keenly through the screaming air as he began the up-part of the loop, and shot high, high, up, up, into the dark again—until he stalled. Then doing a lazy wing-over he soared calmly away inland, flirting on the multiple currents over the broken land, until he was high over the highest mountain.

Now, far beyond him he could see the twinkling iridescence of Van Nuys and San Fernando. To his right was the brilliant blaze of Los Angeles, Hollywood, Beverly Hills.

The shimmering beauty of lights when seen down through the layers of air, instead of laterally through but one layer, moved Sam to a half-formed state of pity and compassion. He did not think of Mully and feel sorry for her. Rather he was touched by a mood that enveloped all Mullys and all women who love and suffer and bicker for a man. And with this feeling colouring every fibre, he rocked over on his side, and then glided slowly through the darkness, back to the Santa Monica palisade. He turned his arms and brought himself to a tip-toe landing beside the bench. He picked up his hat again and walked quietly home through the sweet darkness.

The wild exhilaration of Sam's first outdoor flight remained with his memory, but the ineffable sadness of the mood it had produced clothed his spirit and filled him with lonesomeness. And Sam didn't want to feel lonesome. Above all else he loved gregarious pleasure.

For Sam was not a philosopher who would find warmth in feeling that he had discovered the puny ridiculousness of man and his works. He was a very ordinary sort of chap who wanted nothing quite so much as a good skinful of fish-and-taties from Hobson's shop, or a mug of ale before him at the *Spread Eagle* and a few of the lads beside him to go thoroughly into some such subject as the Grand National or Stanley Baldwin or the football results.

His gift of flying, however, was unique, and he was made as lonesome by it as the last of the one-time billions of passenger pigeons, which lived three years in captivity, there to coo and call to a mate that would never come. And Sam didn't want to feel lonesome.

Apathetic and useless, he wandered about the streets each day, walking for mile after mile, and discovering only greater lonesomeness in that strange land of palm trees and neon lights and blue mountains and people who all spoke with a funny accent.

It was that desire to find someone like himself that made him stop one day in Beverly Hills as he saw a sign. It said: "How About That Canine's Washing and Stripping." Underneath was a big question mark. And under that it said: "Dick Hogglethwaite. Thirty Years' Experience in England and America."

"Happen it's a dog Ah want," Sam said to himself. "And who would be a better chap to talk to than someone who's had experience in England? And even if Mully wouldn't let me have no tyke, there'd be noa harm i' talking to the chap, like, to see what prices they get ovver here."

So Sam ducked under a low-hanging palm frond and pushed open the screen door. There inside he saw a little chap stripping a wirehair. Sam watched him work a while, then the chap looked up and said:

"Well, whet can Ah dew for tha?"

"Eigh, how long's ta been away fro' Huddersfield?" Sam asked.

The chap stopped his work.

"How did ta knaw Ah were fro' Huddersfield?" he asked.

"By thy accent, o' course."

"Well, Ah'll goa to hell," the chap said, surprised. "Ah been here going on thutty year, and Ah thowt Ah'd lost me accent."

"Eigh, tha does talk a bit like a Yankee," Sam agreed, "but there's enow left soa a chap could tell. Ah'm fro' near Huddersfield mysen."

"Soa Ah could tell," the chap said. "Here, owd his chops a minute."

He gave the terrier a slap on the nose to show him who was boss, and Sam held on a while as he trimmed up the tail.

"Now," the chap said as he finished. "Tak' a run for thysen."

The terrier bounded down from the bench.

"Well, it lewks a bit moar like a tyke now," Sam said, approvingly.

"Aye, fair to middling. But ye doan't see too many good dogs here. They wouldn't know what to do wi' a good 'un if they had it."

"Aye, it's a foonny coontry," Sam agreed.

"Well, a lad can addle a nice bit o' brass here," the other said. "These movie stars all have a few dogs, but they don't know nowt about 'em. Ah tell 'em off proper, Ah do. No beating around the bush wi' me."

"Well, tha's Yorksha," Sam reminded.

"That's reight. Here, grab that tarrier and coom i' t' back room. Ah gate to wash a Sealy."

They went in the back room where a regulation bathtub sat amid the tiered cages and kennels.

"Aye," the chap said, as he soaped up the Sealyham, "they don't know owt about dogs here."

He cocked his head.

"Eigh, owd this Sealy a minute. There's someone out front."

Sam stripped off his coat and rolled up his sleeves. Since a chap shouldn't be idle when there's work to do, he nearly had the Sealy finished when the kennel chap came back. He was carrying a miserable bundle under his arm.

"In the name o' Helifax," Sam breathed. "And what is that?"

"Th' woman just browt it in," the other said. "And she sez, 'Can you do owt wi' my dog?' And Ah sez 'What in the name o' goodness is it?' And she sez, 'It's my Yorksha tarrier—Ah give him a bath and Ah can't get him combed out ony more.'"

He held up the poor, tangled mite, that looked like a tarred and feathered Chihuahua, for Sam to see. And Sam started to laugh. It was the best laugh he'd had since he'd left England.

"Eigh, ba gum. Ah nivver thowt Ah'd live to the day when Ah gate to a land what's so dumb the people tries to wash a Yorksha tarrier," Sam gurgled.

"Didn't Ah tell thee, lad?" the other said.

He held up the poor, bedraggled dog, and the men lay back and laughed till they could hear nothing but their own laughter. Washing a Yorkshire terrier was the funniest thing Sam had ever heard.

"It'll tak' thee a month o' Sundays to get it combed out again, lad," Sam would say. He'd wipe the tears from his eyes, but then he would be able

"The lift is out of order

to see the terrier and that would start him off laughing again.

From that day on Sam's days were full, and thoughts of flying again were far from his mind. His waking hours were spent with Dickie Hogglethwaite in the little dog shop, where they would wash and pluck dogs, clip a few dew claws and stand aghast at the ignorance of Americans where dogs were concerned. For Sam, like every Yorkshireman, was born with a fully-fledged omniscience in all things canine.

With the aid of Dickie Hogglethwaite he picked up a collie bitch that didn't have a thing wrong with her—beyond a bit of a gay tail and a touch of a prick ear. But as Hogglethwaite pointed out, there wasn't a thing off with her that couldn't be corrected with a judicious amount of coping—and anyhow, she would make a fine mother.

So when she came in season they pinched a breeding for her from a grand champion collie that a millionaire had sent in to be bathed, and all in all they had a fine time. They washed dogs and talked and made a few bets on the Santa Anita races—for this Dickie Hogglethwaite was by the way of being a bit of a sporting chap.

In fact, they might have gone on indefinitely as they were if it hadn't been for a boarding Pekingese that squeezed through the fence.

Sam and Dick were in the back yard letting the boarders out for exercise when Dick gave a yelp that shook the blobs off the acacia trees.

"Cop that Peke," he yelled.

Sam made a grab, but he was too late. All he got was two whiskers off the Peke's tail as it went through the hole in the fence.

The minute he saw it Dick started out through the front shop, and he was moving fast, because before his eyes was a picture of that Peke disappearing up into the hills and meeting a Siluki or a Keeshond, or even maybe a great Dane—and then he'd have a hell of a job explaining a fine litter of mongrel puppies to the Peke's owner, who was a movie director, and dizzy enough as it stood.

So Dick did record time out through the shop and round into the back lot. And when he got there, there was Sam with the Peke tucked under his arm.

"Well, Ah'll be jiggered," Dick said. "How did tha get out here?"

"Joomped ovver t' fence, lad," Sam grinned. "Here, wetch!"

So just taking off from tip-toe, he sailed over the fence. Then he landed, turned, and jumped back again. That is, it looked as if he were jumping, but of course, it was the merest, simplest little bit of flying for Sam.

"Eigh, lad," Dick said. "That's a varry special gift tha's gate there."

"It is, that," Sam replied.

They went back into the shop.

"That were a champion jump," Dick went on. "That there fence is all of seven foot if it's an inch. And tha did it wi' a Peke bitch under thy arm, too. Why didn'ta tell me tha were a champion athalete?"

"Nay, Ah nivver done no athaletics in ma life, beyond knocking a bit o' knerr and spell," Sam said.

"You don't mean to tell me," Dick ruminated. Then he fumbled in a drawer and found a tape measure and measured the fence. It was seven feet two inches.

"Eigh," he said to Sam. "We got to dew summat about this. Here tha can jump seven foot two, and offhand Ah think the world's record is nobbut six foot eight or summat like that. Ba gum lad, Ah gate an idea we could clean up a pretty penny on this."

Because this Dickie Hogglethwaite was a sporting sort of lad, his mind, of course, ran in that direction. And his big idea was to enter Sam in the Veterans' Relief Games at the Victor McLaglen stadium.

"Here, dost'a think it all reight for ma to goa capering around at ma time o' life?" Sam asked.

"Ah doan't knaw," Dickie said. "But Ah do knaw there's nowt wrang wi' taking a little brass off these here blooming Yankees. They been winning t' Olympics that long it's time a good Britisher showed 'em up, and won a few pounds doing so."

"Aye, there'd be nowt wrang wi' winning a honest bet," Sam agreed.

So Sam went into training. Dickie was the manager and after watching Sam work out in the dog-run for a week, he entered his man in the running high jump, broad jump and pole vault. He fed Sam a diet of raw eggs and sherry and toast, and gave him massages with his very special embrocation, which he had invented for massaging hurt dogs, and which was made of alcohol, camphor and vinegar.

All in all he did everything a serious trainer could do.

"Now, Sam, lad," he said on the day of the meet. "Ah've gate thee in as fine a shape as ivver a man o' thy age could be got. Ah've done ma part. Now thee do thine."

Off they went to the stadium in a taxi, and Dickie went out and placed his bets. When he came back to the dressing-room, his face was lit with a religious glow.

"Ah gate five dollars at five to one on thee for each of the three events," he said. "And Ah gate a bet of two dollars against a hundred that tha tak's all three."

"That sounds like a lot," Sam said slowly. "How much is that i' pounds?"

"Now nivver thee mind that. Us hes gate it i' t' bag, as these Yankees say. Now just thee relax."

So Dickie gave Sam a final rub-down and then helped him pull on a sweatshirt and a long pair of sweat-pants. Then he wrapped a dressing-gown round him and out they went to the stadium.

"Now doan't worry," Dickie said. "Ah know full sure tha can do it."

"If tha feels like that, Ah'm all reight."

The high jump was first on the schedule of Sam's events. Dick stood there and passed up the jumps until it got to five feet ten. Then he pulled off Sam's robe.

"We passed up jumps, so that maun do it first time, lad," he said. "Now tha can do it easy."

Sam said nothing. He felt a little nervous. But he felt Dick's faith behind him, so he trotted up to the bar and sailed over. There were three other lads, and two of them made it.

The bar went up to five eleven. Sam made it, but one of the other lads dropped out.

That left only Sam and one more competitor, and they jumped and jumped, the bar going up a bit at a time, until the loud-speaking arrangement in the grandstand began to say:

"Equalling the outdoor Olympic record in the running high jump. The high jump, ladies and gentlemen. Sam Small of Great Britain now jumping."

Sam trotted up and sailed over. The crowd applauded. The other lad gave a mighty leap and jumped over. The crowd applauded again.

Then the loud-speaker began to shout about how this would be a new world's record, and all the photographers came rushing over and Sam took his little trot, and soared over with inches to spare. The noise and excitement was tremendous. Then the other lad tried, but he couldn't make it. A crowd began to gather about Sam and the officials rushed over with tapes to make sure the bar was set right. They had a great argument, till Sam said:

"Well, lads, to make sure, just shove it up a couple more inches."

Quite amazed, they did so. And Sam sailed over.

Then Dickie Hogglethwaite ran up and threw the dressing-gown round Sam and pulled him away. The officials wanted Sam to see how high he could go.

"Nothing dewing, lads," Dickie said. "Now Ah'm his manager and Ah'm his trainer too. We got two more events and Ah won't let ma man tire hissen out."

ANTS

When Professor Sebastian Bliss came to Channel Bay he found opportunity beckoning him in the shape of a plague of Ants, and what the Ants did for the Professor is nobody's story but GEOFFREY WILLIAMSON'S who will reveal the startling facts in his story "BIG GAME."

NEXT WEEK

Then he got Sam in a corner of the stadium and began rubbing his legs again with training fluid, for all the world as if Sam were Jem Mace or Jack Dempsey or somebody.

"They pulled a ringer in on us," Dick muttered. "That jumping lad were one o' t' best i' t' country. But Ah were sure tha could beat him."

"Aye, Ah could ha' done moar nor that," Sam said.

Dickie fluttered about Sam like a hen with a chick, and after a while took him out for the pole vault. Of course, it was the same story. Sam made a new world's record at 15 feet 3 inches. Then came the broad jump, and Sam was tempted to jump one hundred yards, but he considered that might cause trouble and Dickie wouldn't get his bets paid off. So he just jumped thirty feet for a new record.

All in all, the two chums had a fine day and they felt righteously happy as they went home and fed all the dogs and counted their winnings. Then Dickie sent out for four cans of beer and he let Sam break training and drink one of them.

It was quite a day, indeed.

When Sam set out home that night the reaction from the excitement of the day set in. He felt lonesome and depressed and homesick. He wanted to talk over with someone his new and strange power, and who, of course, would be better than Mully?

But when he got home Mully and Lavinia were all adither. Vinnie had just signed a five-year contract with G-M-G Pictures and, of course, the excitement was tremendous. Sam couldn't get a word in edgewise, and he went to bed feeling very lonely.

The next morning Sam's troubles began. The newspapers were all full of it, about the man who had broken three world's records in one day. The front pages had photographs of Sam in his jersey and sweat-pants, sailing over the bars with his white moustache floating in the wind behind him.

And the articles were, as they say in Hollywood, terrific. One Los Angeles paper had one paragraph of Sam and the rest of the column saying it showed what the Californian climate could do for a man of fifty-three. Another one said it was partly the climate and partly the Californian orange juice that allowed a man of fifty-seven to break world's records.

One paper thought that it was the high amount of Californian sunshine that put extra glycogen into the blood and allowed all Californian athletes to be better than those from the rest of the world. Another said it was the exhilarating Californian air that made athletes on the coast do better; while a tabloid said it was the much higher quality of Californian tracks that accounted for it.

The papers in the East said it was another Californian hoax, and that the officials in Californian always used special Californian tape measures which accounted for the records. In Florida there was a petition sent to the A.A.U. to disallow the new records because one of the men who fired the starting pistols in the sprints didn't have A.A.U. sanction.

One sporting editor said it showed the United States, with the help of Southern California, would be sure to win the next Olympics; and another said that since Sam was British it showed the United States couldn't win the next Olympics unless Southern California took even more of the load.

A San Francisco paper had an article saying that as long as Southern California could develop men like Sam we were safe from Japanese imperialism, and another paper said that since Sam wasn't American it showed clearly that Congress should do something about new fortification programmes along the Pacific.

One famous columnist took nearly his whole column on Sam and said it only went to show that although there were undoubtedly some races in Africa which produced men who could jump even higher than Sam, a white man's brains were many cubic centimetres larger than a Negro's, or a gorilla's, for that matter, although a gorilla was stronger than either, and that while 40,000 Japanese planes could wipe out Los Angeles in less than an hour if they could fly as far as from Japan, it just showed what it was to be a white man.

There was no doubt about it, Sam was important news, as he and Mully soon found out before the day had really started. He was upstairs when Mully found him.

"Now what's tha been up to?" she began.

Sam burrowed down into Mully's clothes closet.

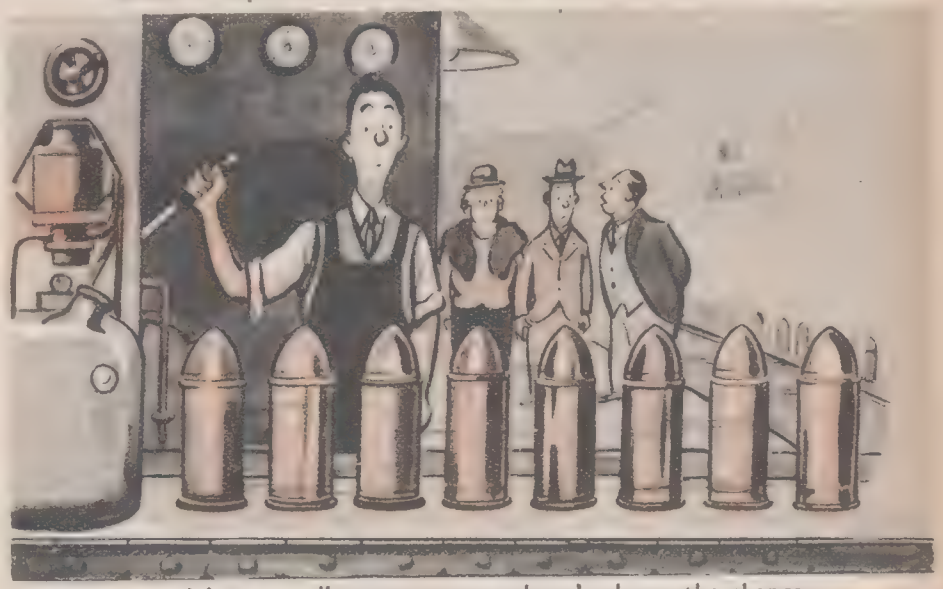
(*please turn to page* 33)

Laug

The "PASSING SHO

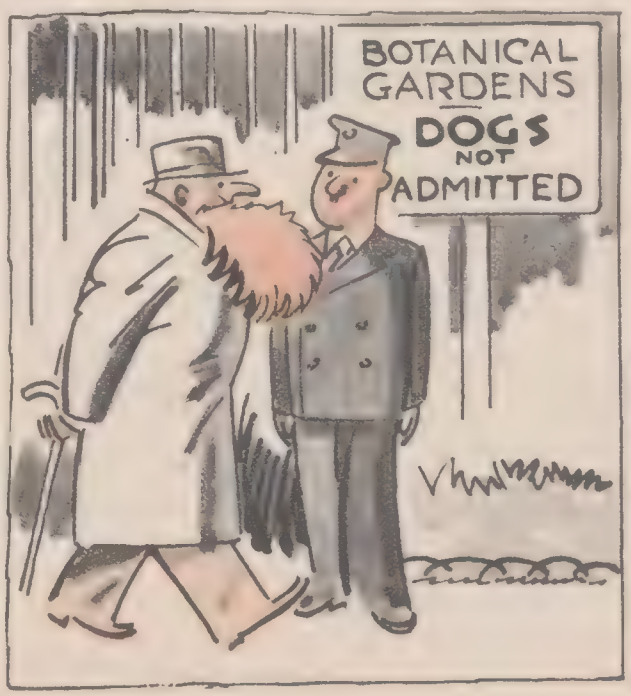
"Every case is full of your things and I've got to put my things in something!"

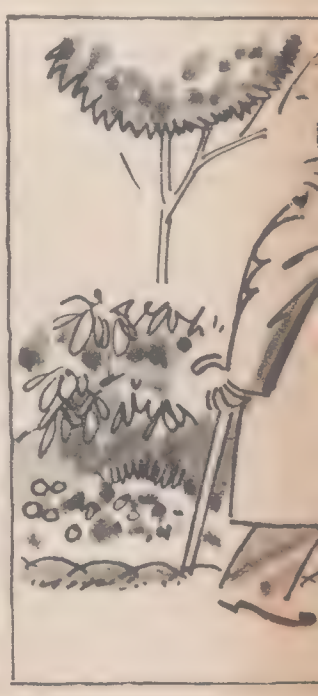
"Look here, professor, we came out here to search for fossils!"



"It's not really monotonous; there's always the chance one might explode!"

"Tchk! Tchk! Jorgenson; you'll have to do better than that"





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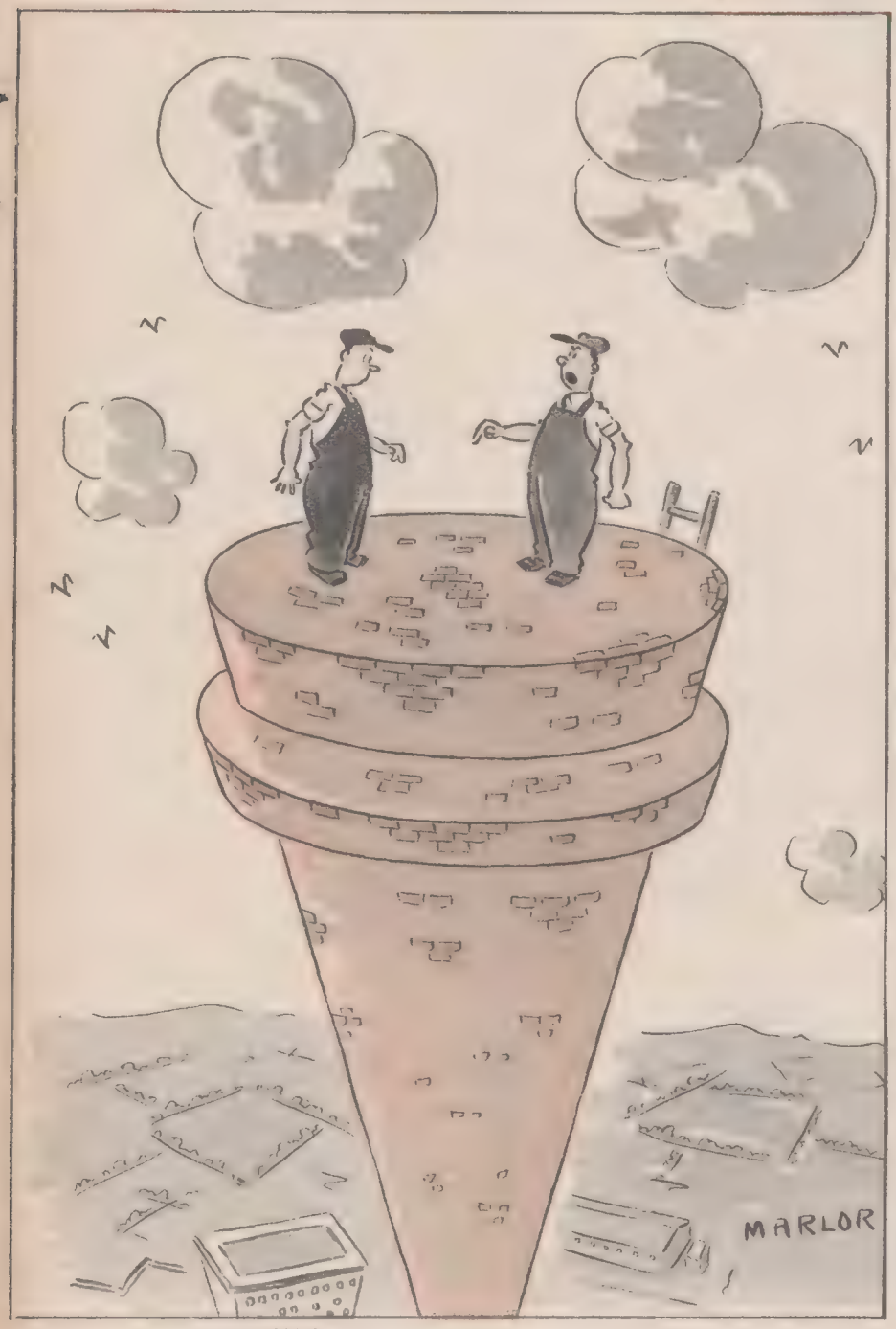

"We've forgotten to leave a hole!"

"Alley-oop!"

Salesmanship

A MAN ALONE

By A. C. BARRETT

LAUGH WITH THE WORLD

"Take care! I am planting peas but I do not want the birds to know."—*Das Illustriere Blatt, Frankfurt.*

Visitor: "You say your husband paid 50,000 dollars for this little old book? He no doubt wanted to show that he has a great regard for literature?"

Mrs. Gottonne: "No, he wanted to show how little he thinks of 50,000 dollars.'

Vidam Ujsag, Budapest.

"Napolean's retreat from Moscow? But there were no cycles in those days!"
"I know — but I simply cannot paint horses."—*Vart Hem, Stockholm*

WACHT'S WACHT FOR YACHTSMEN

CAMEODE BY SHOWELL STYLES

Foreword

THE sportsmen of our Island Race have one unpleasant fact to face; the game of cricket, all agree, cannot be played upon the sea. Surely our summer pastime ought to be some more seafaring sport! Do we not blunder in allotting a secondary place to yachting?

With this hypothesis in view I have collected here a few illuminating hints for those courageous readers who propose (if time and funds allow) to brave the perils of the Tossing Wave.

The Yacht

A yacht, unlike the humbler punt, has one end sharp and one end blunt. A mast, supporting sundry sails, a slippery deck devoid of rails, sufficient intertwisted rope to rob a Sea Scout of all hope—a boat without these things is not a pukka British sailing-yacht.

The bar is situated aft, and this is termed the vessel's "draft."

The Sails

The sails are very big and strong, to pull the heavy boat along. The names that seamen call them by I dare not lay before your eye; but one is big and one is small, and for the present that is all.

Apparent to the meanest mind is Sailing with the Wind Behind; but let me here and now admit that this is all I know of it. The most exhaustive searching, then, among the rude, seafaring men has not explained that curious stunt of Sailing with the Wind In Front.

The prudent amateur, no doubt, will never, never venture out beyond the quay unless he's got a powerful engine in his Yacht.

Admonition

The most half-witted little sap looks dashing in a yachting-cap, and, if assisted by his tailor—well, every nice girl loves a sailor. But oh! beware the risky sport of having wives in every port! The gravest dangers of the sea are nothing to what *that* might be!

Steering

Yachtsmen should practise till they feel quite competent to take the wheel; the compass must be understood before they can be any good. A little earnest thought will show that this is something all should know.

Just for one moment let's pretend we're in a cutter off Land's End. A fog comes up, we cannot see—we've promised to be back for tea. Now mark: a course sou'west by south will bring us to the muddy mouth of Amazon; nor'west, they say, will take us up to Baffin's Bay (outlandish places, where, as yet, good cups of tea are hard to get.) Such inconveniences may completely spoil a yachtsman's day, unless he makes a proper start equipped with compass and with chart.

Mutinies

The only mutiny I know—the "Bounty"—was some time ago. It would not have occurred, I think, if there had been enough to drink. A moral may be drawn from this which no true sailorman will miss; all will run smoothly, never fear, so long as you take lots of beer.

Where To Go

The British yachtsman nowadays should potter round his native bays, restraining his desire to roam more than a little way from home. At Wigan there is Wigan Pier; the Devon coast possesses Beer; the milk of human kindness still is found at Cowes and Portland Bill; but if you take your British ship to foreign parts, you'll end your trip by sinking off the coast of Spain, bombed by some casual aeroplane.

Useful Phrases

The sailorman is always known by certain language of his own. (Believe me, I mean no offence; I speak in the most literal sense.) For instance, "Splice the starboard watch!" and "Shorten sail!" and "Double Scotch!" are frequently upon the lips of those who go to sea in ships. Such phrases as "Belay!" "Avast!" with, now and then, a stormy "Blast!" emitted as you cross the bar, will show the kind of man you are.

Warning

Some yachtsmen try to cultivate a nautical or rolling gait. This, apt enough upon the foam, may be misunderstood at home.

Conclusion

Statistics gathered by my spies affirm, to my intense surprise, that 99.5 per cent. of Englishmen were never meant for sailors, for they sadly bear the horrid taint of *mal-de-mer*. This being so, I can but say "Alack! That I should see the day when Britons of the Island Race should suffer such severe disgrace."

Take my advice and stay below; I always do and I should know. Though, seriously it's better far to take an inland cruise—by car.

SIMPSON Iodine Soap is the Soap with a lovely "Sea-breeze" smell. Iodine is made from seaweed and is as necessary as Sunshine and Air. The finest soap for keeping your skin young and beautiful and free from wrinkles. Simpson Iodine Soap is a sure safeguard against the dangers of dirt, germs and infection. For keeping your hair fresh and lovely—free from dandruff—there is no better shampoo. Refuse All Imitations. Insist on Simpson Brand Iodine Soap. See Mr. Simpson's photo on the Wrapper as shown above.

ALSO "PERFUMED" IODINE SOAP 6d.
For those not appreciating the smell of Iodine we have also produced an exquisitely perfumed Simpson Iodine Soap (in a buff wrapper). If you prefer this just say "PERFUMED" or Buff Wrapper when asking for SIMPSON IODINE SOAP.

SOLD EVERYWHERE

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The PASSING SHOW, August 20, 1938

SHOOTING AT MARSDEN'S BORE

This epic of the bad lands, where loneliness and thirst deprive all but the best of their humanity, shows that even a villain, how ever bad, may die for a very good cause

BY INGRAM MORGAN

ILLUSTRATED BY S. TRESILIAN

IN the morning old Spinifex crawled out of his bunk, raked together the embers of last night's fire, added a few twigs and blew them into a blaze. While his black tea was brewing, he collected a few odds and ends, including his long rifle and all the ammunition he had left, and carried them to a safe distance outside. Then, after breakfast, he set fire to the hut in which he had been living for—so some said—over twenty-five years.

Spinifex went about it quite methodically, although the job was easy enough, the hut being built principally of bark, sun-dried to tinder by the years. Such remnants of furniture as he possessed burned like matchwood. With no sign of emotion, Spinifex watched it go. Apart from a couple of crows on the limb of a nearby dead tree he was the sole spectator. For that matter, he was the only human for many miles around.

In an hour, nothing of his habitation was left but a heap of ashes, among which showed a few articles of blackened metal. A heat haze danced over the ashes. Laughing harshly, the old man picked up his rifle, turned his back on the spot and headed west through the mulga.

Someone said Spinifex was a Russian. Possibly he came from one of the minor Slav states. In his youth, claimed rumour also, he had committed some unpardonable political offence, from whose consequences he had barely escaped with his life. Impossible to say how such tales gained currency. Certainly Spinifex himself had never related his story, if he had one. A very old story now, whatever it was, for he had been living alone on the fringe of the Central Australian desert longer than most men who passed that way could remember. He had not been very young when he first entered upon this self-imposed exile and he had grown old there—old, gaunt, grey-bearded, cantankerous.

Twenty-five years alone. Quite alone. Not even a dog for company. Most bush hermits keep a dog—some a whole, canine tribe—but Spinifex harboured neither animal nor bird.

His hatred of life seemed to extend to everything living. He lived by destruction—the trapping and shooting of dingoes. A dead shot with the rifle, his curious, pale green eyes were as keen as they had been a quarter of a century before.

Two unshaven men came over the desert from the north. Each rode one mule and led another, heavily laden. The day was hot. The air trembled over the great, arid expanse of reddish sand and stones. The animals plodded wearily along. The men talked little in the heat. There was no wind, except an occasional queer eddy rising from nothing, whipping the fine sand into a sudden spiral, and dying down again, mysteriously, as it had originated.

To the two men, the desert did not appear flat. It seemed, rather, like a great bowl, whose exact centre they had now reached and whose rim was the encircling horizon. Looking back, it appeared as though they had, for hours, been descending a long slope and now had another corresponding slope to climb.

Suspended above the southern rim of this great bowl, but separated from it by some trick of refraction, was the dim, reddish-purple shadow of a range of bare hills. They formed the southern boundary of the desert many miles away. On the

It was Spinifex. In his moment of mad triumph, cunning had deserted him. The figure on the sand moved. Quicker than thought, he whipped up the carbine and fired

far side lay country less desolate than that they now traversed.

Ahead of the men, as they moved steadily onward, mirages appeared and dissolved. Ghostly lagoons, in whose mock-cool shallows stood flooded groves of trees. These visions were as unreal and evanescent as pictures on the screen. Through them, as the men advanced, appeared the reddish sand, the stones of the desert.

The men were prospectors, returning from a moderately successful expedition. The gold they carried represented a good deal more than wages for the time occupied by the trip. Riordan, a thickset, slightly bald man of over fifty, had a wife and family in a sun-dried township on the edge of civilisation. Leigh, his junior by over twenty years, was looking forward to a spree in the city.

It was their custom to rest up for a couple of hours during the hottest part of the day, but now they halted only long enough to ease the loads on the mules, and pushed on. They still had water in their water-bags, but the mules had drunk nothing since late the afternoon before and were distressed and uneasy.

"When do you think we'll make it, Con?" asked Leigh.

"It's two o'clock now." Riordan pulled out a heavy, gunmetal watch. "Oh, round about five-thirty. And none too soon, at that."

"Shouldn't have come this way without camels."

"It's all right. Not as if we were makin' right across the desert. We're only crossin' a piece of it."

"Sure there's water here?"

"There's water in Marsden's Bore all the year round," Riordan said. "If there wasn't, you wouldn't catch me comin' this way with mules, me boy. Don't worry. There's lashin's of water. It runs away day and night, soakin' into the sand, millions of gallons of it every year goin' to waste, as you might say, though it's hard to know just how anyone could do anything with it."

"If they ran it through channels . . ."

"Dig channels in this?" Riordan grinned through his stubble. "Might as well run channels through blottin' paper. Don't know as it'd be much good to anyone, either, for maybe thousands of years. This sand wants more than water before it's any use. There's got to be chemical elements in the soil, and such like, and the only chemical element I know of that's in this soil is salt. The water'd only bring more of that up to the top. No, I guess when nature made this place this way, she made it to stay. It mightn't suit you and me, me boy, but we don't count—any more than ants count. That's all we are, out here—just over-size ants, creepin' round, lookin' for somethin' to take home."

It was too hot to smoke. They did not waste time stopping to eat. That pleasure was reserved for coolness and evening. The water in their bags tasted of canvas and of the mineral impregnating the well from which it had been taken the afternoon before. Late in the day, as the shadows stretched out to grotesque lengths across the sand, the mules seemed to gain new strength. They quickened their stride and held their heads up. They scented the water ahead.

"Won't be long now," said Riordan. "See them stones?"

Only the keen sight of outback wanderers could have picked out those rocks.

"Government party built it round the bore to stop the sand driftin' in," explained Riordan. "Another hour and a half and we're there."

The rays of the declining sun were less fierce. The fall in temperature, the prospect of rest and food, filled Leigh with fresh vitality. He wet his lips and whistled.

His comrade's timing was accurate.

The spot on the horizon grew larger. In ninety minutes, it had changed to a sort of circular breast-work of piled rocks, five feet high. From a gap a stream of water slowly ran, to be absorbed in the sand twenty yards from its source. The mules wanted to canter, but the riders held them in.

As they approached the well, a gaunt, bearded man rose from behind the stones. He held a rifle.

"Move on," he shouted in cracked, high-pitched tones. "You can't stop here!"

For a moment Riordan stared in amazement. Then he laughed.

"Hell!" he said. "It's old Spinifex. Give me a fright, bobbing up like that. Thought for a moment it was a ghost, or something." He raised his voice: "Hullo, Spinifex! What are you doing here? Off your usual track, ain't you?"

"Move on!" cried the old man, threateningly. "This here is private property. You can't get no water here."

"Who is he?" demanded Leigh, somewhat alarmed. He was trying to restrain the restless animal he bestrode and to manage the thirsty pack mule. "What's the old codger up to?"

"Damned if I know, exactly," confessed Riordan. "This is a new one to me—he's only an old 'hatter' * been living over in the mulga for donkey's years, but what his game is——"

The sharp crack of the old man's rifle cut short his utterance. His shapeless hat fell on the sand. Spinifex appeared again.

"I told yer to get on," he yelled, hoarsely. "Now get on! If yer don't understand what words mean, perhaps bullets'll satisfy yer. Next time, it won't be yer hat."

Riordan's expression changed to a mixture of stupefaction and anger.

"Why," he said, "the old devil's gone mad. Stark mad."

Leigh pulled the carbine from its bucket at his saddle.

"Mad, is he? Mad or sane, jokes like that won't go down with us."

But there was nothing to shoot at. The breast-work of stones provided an excellent fortification, behind which the old man had dived. At the same moment the rifle spoke again from some unseen loophole, and Leigh felt his mule crumple under him. With a queer grunt it slipped to the ground. The rider just managed to swing off as it rolled over. The young man's face was black with passion.

"By God!" he said, thickly. "I'll fix him for that. I'll——"

Riordan reached down and seized him by the shoulder.

"Don't be a fool, Dave," he cried, earnestly. "He's a dead shot. Can't you see that? Don't move forward, or he'll murder us both. I tell you he's crazy . . ."

"Are we going to let him get away with that, just because he's off his head?"

"No, but wait. Wait, I tell you. For God's sake, use your brains. Can't you see we haven't got a hope with him as things are? Come back a bit. I don't want you dead on my hands. He's got the drop on us."

Leigh looked down at the mule and his voice choked.

"Killed her!" he said. "In cold blood! The swine! Never did anything to him, but he shot her. I—I was fond of the poor brute, Con."

"Come back a bit. There's a big rock over there. Come back."

"What, and leave her here like this?"

"For the time. Can't do anything else. He'll shoot you just as quick. Me, too. Look—I got a wife and kids, Dave."

The pack mule rearing and plunging, Leigh led it past its dead companion, with Riordan bringing up his protesting animals. There was no protection for the mules, which had to be tethered to keep them from making for the water.

The men crouched down in the indifferent shelter of a big rock a couple of hundred yards from the bore. As if to remind them that he was still there and in full knowledge of their movements, Spinifex fired another shot. They heard the bullet flatten itself against the rock.

"He's shooting at the mules," said Leigh, with an oath.

"Not him. If he was, he'd a got them. He can shoot the cap off a bottle at five hundred yards. That's only to remind us. We're safe enough if we stop here."

"How the hell can we stay here? We've got to get water."

"Yes. And the only water that's any use to us is at the bore."

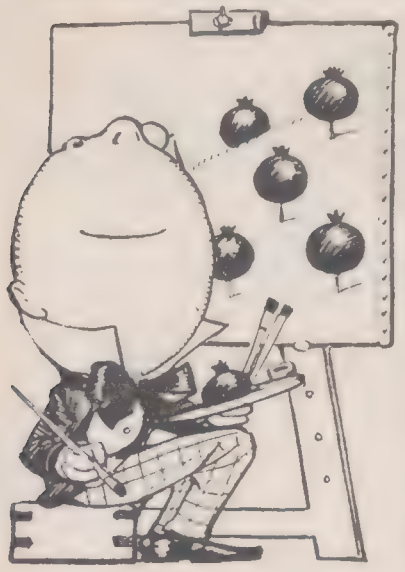
"There's still a drop in my bag."

"Leave it for a while, unless you feel you just got to have it. Me, I can go a bit longer. It's cooler now."

"I can wait," said Leigh, with resolution. "But what's his idea? That's what I can't figure out.

(*Please turn over*)

*Australian term for hermit.



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What's he want to shoot us for? I never seen him before in my life. You know him, Con—you ever do anything to him?"

"Not me." Riordan shook his head. "I've seen him odd times and passed the time of day with him. Not that he ever answered beyond a grunt. He's gone mad, that's what it is. Anyone can see that. Mad through livin' on his own all this time. I've seen it happen before, but never as bad as this. Spinifex never did have no time for anyone beside himself and now he's showin' it properly. Tell you straight, Dave, I don't know what to do."

They sat awhile in silence. The sun was setting. Red flooded the desert.

"Suppose we took him from each side?" suggested Leigh, at last.

"No good. You can see what his shootin's like. He'd get us both."

"If one kept shooting, while the other crept up? I'm game to have a go, Con. I got it in for him, shooting Jess the way he did. You tackle him from this side. I'll go round and creep up on him from the other. I'll give it a go."

"No," said Riordan. "He's got them rocks sort of loopholed. He's under cover all the time. You'd get a bullet through the head, and what for? It's no use, I tell you. We'll have to think of somethin' better than that."

"I tell you I'm game to try it," said the younger man, obstinately.

"Hinting I'm not?" returned Riordan, quietly. "You know me better than that, or you should. You may be game to do the crawling up, Dave, but I'm not game to let you. See? There's no cover between us and him. I'm not going to be left here with my mate dead, and me just as bad off as ever. Wait a while. I don't reckon he wants to kill us—he'd a done that before if that was his idea."

"What else is it, then?"

"Just to head us off that water. He's got some crazy notion in his head about that. As long as we keep our distance, we're safe."

"From him," agreed Leigh. "But while we're keeping safe from him, we're going to die of thirst here. Can't we get on our way, then, and leave the old swine be?"

"It's over forty mile to Wilson's Soak," said Riordan. "We'd never make it, Dave. Them mules wouldn't last half the distance, not over this country. All I wish is, we'd never come this way. But how was I to know?"

"That ain't your fault," said Leigh. "I'm not blaming you. But I wish to God we could do something. Sticking here talking about it's getting on my nerves."

Daylight faded. The afterglow died in the west. The hue of the sky changed from red to opal. In the east, a star or two glimmered. Riordan looked up gloomily.

"Clear as a bell," he said. "Blast it, if there was only a few clouds about, it'd get dark. Then we might do something. Your idea might work then, Dave."

"Well, it'll get dark won't it, before morning?"

"Remember what the moon was like last night?"

Already the moon was peering over the rim of the desert. Magnified by refraction into an enormous red disc, it mounted swiftly.

There was a welcome chill in the air. A sudden light leaped up at the bore. Secure behind his stony breastwork, the lunatic garrison of one had lit a fire. From where the two prospectors were, it seemed as though a crater had opened in the desert, releasing volcanic fires.

The red of the moon faded to a yellowed silver. The desert was flooded with white light, almost strong enough to read by.

"What time does it set?" asked Leigh. "We'll have to do something then. This can't go on. The old devil must sleep. Surely to God."

"Some time, sure. And so will we. Watch-and-watch, Dave. You sleep first. I'll wake you afterwards."

"I'm too damned thirsty to sleep."

"Have a drink, then."

They drank a little of the remaining water and Leigh rolled himself in a blanket. Riordan leaned up against the rock, his carbine beside him. Soon steady breathing told him that weariness had conquered his comrade. He himself felt tired, but too unstrung to sleep.

He wondered if Leigh realised how serious the position was. The young man was enraged over the shooting of his mule, but did he understand that they themselves were facing death?

A chill wind, so faint that it was merely a soundless breath, murmured over the desert. It was as though the Angel of Death now passed overhead fanning them with the beat of his spectral wings. Riordan shivered. He was afraid.

The moon rose higher. Just their cursed luck, Riordan thought, that this night of all nights must be full moon. To creep out across the sand now was to offer as plain a target as at high noon.

The mules stood motionless, their heads hanging. Poor, patient brutes, they knew water was at hand and no doubt wondered, dimly, why they were not permitted their allowance. They knew nothing of the crazy killer standing sentry over the bore.

Spinifex's fire died down. Once Riordan fancied he saw the tall form of the lunatic marching about in the glow of the fire, and was on the point of chancing a shot, but he desisted. If he missed there would be reprisals. The mules would be an easy mark for the madman's rifle. They had lost one animal already and could afford to take no more chances.

Riordan was a slow-going, slow-thinking, reliable man; an expert at his own line and a better geologist and metallurgist than many men with strings of diplomas. He had faced the ordinary perils of the Outback without hesitation, but in this situation he felt lost and terrified. So far as he could see, it was a question either of dying slowly of thirst in full view of Marsden's Bore, or of dying quickly by a madman's bullet. The thought of Mary and the children haunted him through the night.

Leigh woke, muttered something, and then, remembering where he was, sat up.

"Why didn't you wake me before?'

"It's all right, son. You ain't had more than your share."

"Curse, it, it's still as light as day."

"Yes, and will be for hours."

"What's he doing now?" The younger man stared from behind the rock. "I wonder if he's asleep yet? Surely to God he must be, an old man like that. He can't stay awake all the time."

He seized his carbine.

"No, you don't," said Riordan, quickly. "Not yet. You got to wait till the moon sets."

"I can go if I want to," said Leigh. "There is no need for you to worry."

Riordan wrenched the weapon from him.

"You wait," he said, firmly. "When you come with me first, you agreed I was boss. That still stands. I'm going to sleep now. Call me when the moon's gone."

Riordan did not drop off as readily as his younger comrade, but at last his breathing became steady and regular. Leigh leaned against the rock, immobile as a statue.

Time and the moon, too, seemed to stand still. A fever of impatience burned in Leigh's veins, although he shivered with nervousness and the chill of the desert night. If only there were a cloud in the sky, just big enough to obscure the moon for ten minutes! But between earth and heaven there was no breath of vapour.

Riordan awoke with a start. His heart raced madly. The sound of the shot still echoed in his ears. He leaped up. The moon had set, but the faint tint of dawn was in the east and there was light enough to see Leigh staggering back over the sand. He dropped his carbine, went back for it and came on, clutching his left shoulder with his right hand. Riordan ran out to meet him and caught him as he fell. His face was twisted with pain.

"He got me," he gasped. "I thought he must be asleep . . . no sound . . . anywhere . . . I should have woke you but I . . ."

He drifted off into incoherence. Riordan bent over him, ripped off his shirt. There was a bullet hole high up in the shoulder. Blood oozed slowly out.

Spinifex had been only too wide awake! His aim, despite bad visibility, only too good. Leigh's collar bone was smashed; possibly his shoulder blade, too. God, thought Riordan, what a mess! He poured a little of the remaining water on to a rag and washed and plugged the wound. During the process, Leigh came to and cried feebly for a drink. Riordan gave him all the water that was left. He dropped off into semi-consciousness as dawn broke.

The sun was an hour old when Riordan heard a hail. Turning, he saw a man coming up with a tin bucket in each hand.

He was a toilworn, ragged man of thirty-odd, sunburned to a darker hue than most half-castes, and walking with the leaden gait of a man at his last gasp with weariness. He halted, put down the tins, and stood like a man on guard.

"What's going on here?" His voice was harsh and he eyed the prone form of Leigh askance. "Who are you? Is he sick?"

"Shot. He'll be worse than sick soon—that's what I'm frightened of. That hatter from over Turvey's way has gone mad or something. He's over at the bore shooting anyone who comes near. Won't let anyone get water. That's how this happened. My mate tried to rush him and got a bullet in the shoulder."

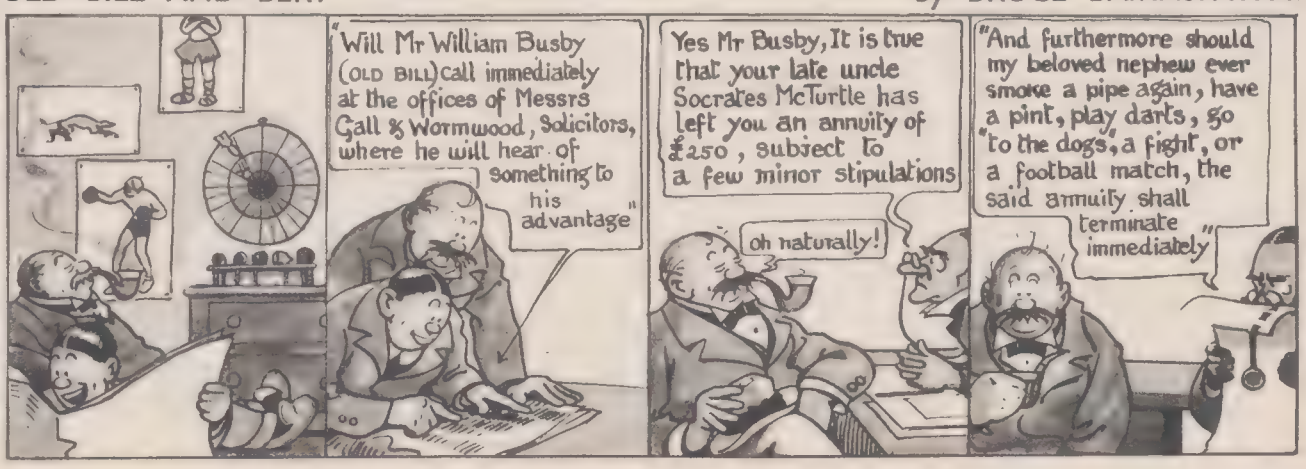
The newcomer stared at Leigh, as though trying hard to comprehend an incomprehensible position. His mental processes, either naturally or through fatigue, did not seem very fast.

"Mean to say," he ventured at last, incredulously, "that he won't let a man get no water?"

Riordan nodded grimly. "That's the size of it. You can see what's happened."

"But I got to get water!" cried the other. "I got my missus in a truck over there," he waved his hand towards the

OLD BILL AND BERT — by BRUCE BAIRNSFATHER



northern horizon, "and I got to get her to the doctor quick. Been travelling all night, with hardly no water in the radiator until the engine started to run red-hot. I was scared to go another half-mile in case it seized altogether on me. I walked about six miles. I got to get water and go back."

Before Riordan could do more than call on him to stop, he picked up his buckets and started off towards the bore, disregarding the prospector's warning. He had not gone more than about fifty yards when a shot and a clang broke the silence. At the same instant one of the buckets flew from the newcomer's hand. Leaving it where it had fallen, he came running back with the other, his face grey under its tan.

"Did you see that?" he cried, in terror. "Chrissy, did you see that? It's—it's murder! Here,mate, lend us one of them rifles."

"That'd be suicide," said Riordan. "There ain't a bit of cover between us and him."

"But what are we going to do? I tell you I got to have water! He can't do that! Give me one of them rifles!"

"What's your name?" asked Riordan, more to gain time than knowledge.

"White. Bill White. I got my missus sick on a truck out there. She's all by herself and I got to get her to the doctor. I got to, do you hear? Give me one of them rifles, or I'll——"

"Listen here," said Riordan. White had been badly shaken; his face was twisted with fear and his mouth moved nervously. "Listen here. You see how it is. That old devil out there can drill us any time he wants. He won't unless we start moving his way. You see what happened to my mate——"

"I got to have water, I tell you!' reiterated White, his voice trembling. "It's no good talking like that. Blast it, I can't leave her there, can I? I'm going to do something."

"I know,I know," Riordan said, harshly. "You reckon I wouldn't have done something if I could? I'm only trying to tell you, White. You don't want your wife to be a widow without ever knowing how it happened, do you?" He thought for a moment. "Any chance of getting that truck of yours up here, do you think? We might use it as cover."

"Not a hope," said White, dully. "She was knockin' and poundin' her heart out when I stopped. Another five minutes and she'd have been afire. She's there to stop until I get water. God, can't you think of something?"

Leigh opened his eyes, moved, muttered feebly for water. Riordan tried to quieten him with a word or two, but he was semi-delirious. The prospector shook his fist towards the unseen figure of the lunatic behind his breastwork of stones and broke into a volley of oaths.

"If only he'd show up," he said. "But he don't. Too cunning for that. He's mad, but he's got some part of his wits left."

The situation was as desperate as it was strange. There was the water, but to cross the open space surrounding it was certain death. The old lunatic was as complete a master of that area as though his long magazine rifle had been a veritable death ray.

"Look here," said White, desperately. "I got to try. I can't stop here, looking at them stones. Get your gun and watch. If you see the top of his head, let him have it."

He moistened his lips with the tip of his tongue and picked up the sound bucket.

"Can't leave the missus out there," he added, in a choked voice.

"Wait a bit," said Riordan, suddenly. "Someone's coming."

White swung about. From the east a man came swiftly on a camel, the long shadow cast by the rising sun leaping swiftly before him. A smallish man, young, clean shaven with a wry, cynical mouth.

He dismounted and came across.

"Which of you blokes is named White?" he demanded, curtly. "*You?* Well, what are you doing here? I come across your wife in a truck out there. Said you'd gone for water. Know how sick she is?"

His words cut like a whip. White winced under them.

"I can't help it," he broke out, hysterically. "I——"

Riordan cut in, explaining the situation. The new arrival listened without comment. He eyed Riordan, looked down at the moaning Leigh, and out across the cleared space to the bore. Subconsciously, Riordan noted that his eyes were unusual. One was hazel, the other grey.

"Them guns loaded?" he asked abruptly. "Gimme one." He cut Riordan's protest short. "Gimme that gun. Can't you understand English?"

"I tell you——"

"You told me once, ain't you? I got no time to waste." He pulled the carbine from Riordan's grasp. "This bloke's got a sick wife; you got a missus and kids, so you said Well, I got neither. Then there's this bloke here; you got to get him to a doctor. That's right, ain't it? Well, then! Say, if the old looney pinks me, me name's Jack. The police'll want to know, but no one else will."

With Leigh's carbine at the trail, he bent low and started to run towards the bore. He ran fast, zig-zagging continually. Riordan and White watched fascinated. Riordan lifted his own weapon to his shoulder, rested it on the top of the rock and trained it on the breastwork, praying for a target. None appeared.

There was a shot from the bore, but Jack ran on, unhurt. Another shot . . . another. Still Jack ran.

Suddenly he staggered slightly, recovered, hurled himself forward again, twisting and turning.

"I get his idea," cried Riordan. "Doubling round it. Reckons Spinifex mightn't have enough holes to cover all the ground. . . . God, he's gone!"

The runner had fallen forward. They saw him lying on the sand, moving convulsively. Then he lay still. He was not more than fifty yards from the wall of stones. White, his little remaining nerve gone, burst into sobs.

Then a head peeped over the stones. It was Spinifex. In his moment of mad triumph, cunning had deserted him. The figure on the sand moved. Quicker than thought, he whipped up the carbine and fired. There was a startled yell from behind the rocks and the head disappeared. They saw Jack pick himself up and run forward, the carbine at the ready. Then he turned and waved. . . .

Riordan ran, too, with White after him, the petrol-can bucket banging against his leg.

Sitting on the ground beside the dead body of old Spinifex, the little man was gazing at his hand, which was covered with blood. There was blood, too, on his shirt.

"I thought he'd got me somewhere," he said, with a wry smile. "First time I ever been shot. Funny thing, it's just starting to hurt now."

White took the little man's camel and went with the precious water to his truck. In an hour he was back at the bore driving slowly, leading the awkward, protesting animal behind. Lying on a mattress in the truck was a woman, deadly pale, with great, burning eyes.

Two more men had reached the bore. Big men in khaki, with wide-brimmed puggareed hats. They had come up on camels, too. One of them was doctoring Leigh. The other, with a spade from Riordan's outfit, dug a big hole in the sand.

"Where's that bloke, Jack?" demanded White. "How is he? I got to get on—my missus is sick—but she wants to see him before we move on. Reckon if it hadn't been for him, we'd——"

The man ceased digging and leaned on his spade.

"Sorry," he said, gravely. "She won't be able to see him, mate. He's dead."

White was stunned.

"Dead?" he repeated. "God, that's bad——"

"Pretty bad," said the man, nodding. "But not so bad as you might think. Know who he was?"

White shook his head.

"Never heard of Jack Bainbridge, with the funny eyes?"

"No. I ain't heard much news at all lately."

"We've been after him for murder," said the man in khaki. "You see, in a way, this was a bit of good luck for him."

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ALTHOUGH at the beginning of this century, 156 babies out of every 1,000 died before their first birthday, last year only 58 died. Although this decrease in the percentage of infant mortality is striking enough, the lives of many more babies can be saved, if we are prepared to perfect our maternity and child welfare services and pursue an enlightened policy of making provision for specialised research into the causes of infant mortality.

The National Baby Week Council which has just celebrated its twenty-second anniversary, needs every help we can give them.

The fall which has occurred in the infant death rate since 1900 has been mainly confined to the last eleven months of the babies' first year. The loss of life in the first month is still very heavy.

★ The number of still-born infants and deaths in the first month of life in England and Wales during 1936 was 43,299—an appalling figure.

The aim of the National Baby Week Council is to improve the services which exist to safeguard the expectant mother. It is essential, in order to save many of the babies who at present die in the first month of life, that skilled ante-natal care should be available for all mothers, and that they themselves should be educated to appreciate the necessity for such care.

The Council aims not only at saving life, but at making those little children who have weathered the first few years, as happy as they can by giving them more nursery schools, playing fields, playgrounds in connection with every re-housing scheme, facilities for recreative and remedial exercises for pre-school children under skilled supervision, schemes for country holidays and for convalescence after illness, for the children of poor parents.

★ Neither are the mothers forgotten. It is over seven years ago that "Keep-Fit" classes for mothers attending maternity and child welfare centres in Sunderland were started, and other areas are now following Sunderland's example. These classes, run under expert medical supervision, will eventually become part of the routine service of the centres.

They will provide the "keep fit" opportunity for hard-worked mothers of families, whose domestic ties prevent them from enjoying the facilities for sport and recreation enjoyed by the general public.

Since the scheme began, in Sunderland, an average of seventy mothers, many of them wives of unemployed men, have attended the classes held once a week. There is an ideal nursery with plenty of toys where the mothers may leave their babies and their toddlers in good hands while the class is in progress.

The "Keep Fit" exercise routine is not a mechanical stretching of arms and legs, but a revitalising experience for these women. The mothers, to their delight, find that, as the stiffness wears out of their joints, they do not tire so soon. With the increasing mobility of shoulders, hips, knees, ankles and feet, every movement involved in the day's housework can be done with great economy of effort and a consequent saving of energy.

★ Corrective exercises are given to improve muscles that have lacked proper development, and the mothers are taught how to hold themselves correctly. Best of all, the class, with its gay music, its stimulating, carefully planned routine of exercise and its sympathetic instructress, is a real mental tonic. When it is over, the mothers look and feel buoyant and happy, and ready to tackle the problems of life with renewed courage.

So you see that if the National Baby Week Council had its way, we should soon be an A.1. nation, so we should certainly do all we can to help the good work.

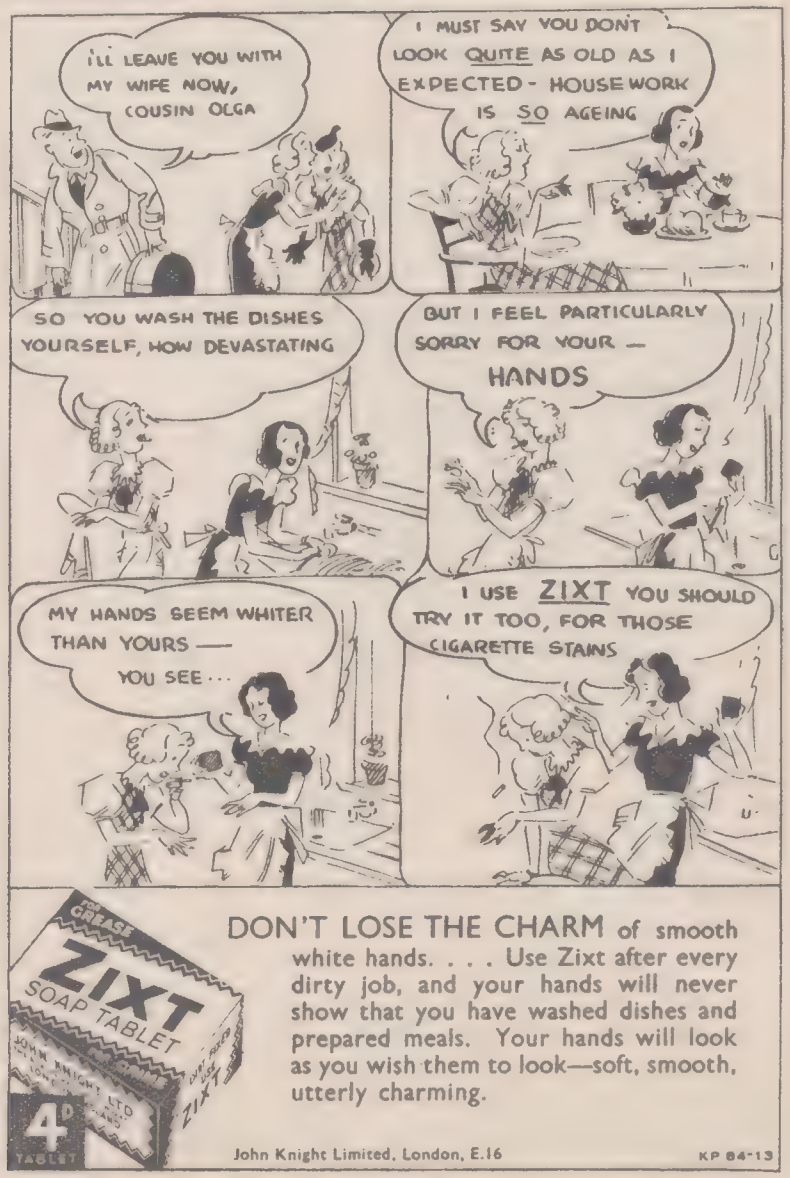
★ Quite recently a helpful reader sent me a recipe for amber marmalade. She tells me that she has made more than 275 lbs. of it and it has always been a great success, so I hasten to pass her recipe on to you. It can be made at any time of the year.

Take one each of the largest grapefruit orange and lemon you can buy. Measure six and a half pints of cold water into a pan, add five lbs. of sugar, squeeze the fruit and add the juice while bringing to the boil. Remove all the pips from the fruit, and mince all the peel and any fruit that may be left after the squeezing, adding this to the rest and then boil hard for 15 minutes. Stand overnight, then boil again for another 15 minutes and allow to stand. On the third day, boil for one hour or until it sets on a saucer. It should be firm. This makes just 8 lbs. of marmalade. My helpful correspondent adds that hard boiling is the secret of success.

★ One of my friends is lucky enough to have a house sufficiently large to enable her to keep the third floor apart for her children. Up there at the top of the last flight of stairs you come upon a set of rooms almost like a separate little flat, and there Chris and Jenny can make as much noise as they like—and they do!

Last Saturday I went to tea and dinner with this friend. Her name is Pat. John, her husband, was out all the afternoon playing cricket and did not come home until 7 o'clock when he rushed straight upstairs to have a bath and change.

He shouted from the top of the stairs: "Will it be all right for me to use the



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VIRGINIA HALL'S PAGE

children's bathroom?" I thought this a bit strange until Pat told me that they've just had this bathroom re-decorated and John likes it so much that he uses it in preference to their own.

And I don't blame him, for it's really remarkably attractive. They've had it painted white all over, and the only decoration is a family of penguins which have been painted in one corner of the walls. The pictures are about life-size and look just as if they are standing on the floor. They're awfully cute and the children love them. They have christened them George, Martha and Claude!

While I was in that bathroom I noticed a black and white toothbrush with "Penguin" written on the handle. I asked Pat if that was Claude's special property, but I was told that it belonged to Chris, and the yellow one next to it was Jenny's.

★ Pat was telling me that she simply swears by this particular make of toothbrush (its name is not "Penguin"—that's only because of the colouring of that particular type). You can buy these brushes at varying prices from 6d. to 1s. 9d. in a number of patterns in hard and medium texture and in so many colours, both plain and marked, that a family of twenty could keep their toothbrushes hanging in the bathroom without getting them mixed up!

If you are interested and would like more particulars of these brushes, will you write to me, marking your envelopes "Penguin"?

★ I noticed at a party the other evening a lovely spray of flowers on a girl's dress. It was a very deep pinky-purple and looked marvellous on the powder blue background of her frock. When I got nearer I had a good look at those flowers and found they were one spray of gladioli broken off just below the bottom flower and the stalk bound with silver paper. Each flower stood up as if it had been wired, in fact the whole boutonniere looked most extravagant and just as if it had been specially arranged by the florist. So next time you want to look expensive, just nip off the top of that prize gladioli which is growing in the garden, and the garden's loss will be more than compensated by your own gain.

★ Are you one of those people who don't like nighties and yet find that pyjamas always gape at the waist leaving a strip of bare back to get cold? If you are, I've found the very thing for you.

They are all-in-one pyjamas. You just step into them and they fasten in such an ingenious way that you feel perfectly dressed whatever movements you make.

They're very attractive and are made in plain and floral cotton, silk, art. silk and crepe-de-chine for summer wear, and wincette (that is, cotton and wool), and a pure wool material for winter. They cost, in cotton, from 11s., and in art. silk, from 17s. 6d.

The same type of pyjama is made for children and is priced from 5s. 6d. The material in which these are made may be plain, printed with floral or nursery rhymes. There are also various models for men but there's nothing floral about these! Just good solid stripes or plain material, and they cost 12s. 6d.

Cut on the same pattern as these all-in-one pyjamas are some attractive beach shorts, with sun-bathing tops. These, again, are all-in-one, with pleated shorts, a tailored bodice the front of which has a turned down collar while the back is cut down to the waist for sunbathing. They are made in various fabrics, colours and designs, and cost from 7s. 6d. to 12s. 6d.

If you want to know more about these garments, write to me, marking your envelope "Pyjamas" and I shall be pleased to see that full particulars are sent to you.

If you are interested in any of the things mentioned in these pages, please write to Virginia Hall, c/o "The Passing Show," 92 Long Acre, W.C.2, for she is very willing to help

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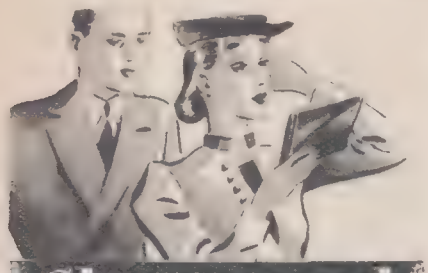

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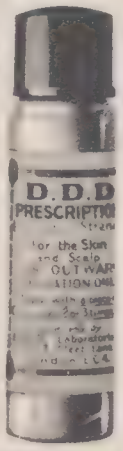

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WORLD WITHOUT TIME

BY W. J. PASSINGHAM

ILLUSTRATED BY T. GRAINGER JEFFREY

WHO'S WHO IN THE STORY

SAM KILLICK, a journalist, is describing what happened while he was a member of a cruising party sailing the southern seas in the yacht, *Solar Star*, which was in the charge of

CAPTAIN JOHN BARLEY, a grey-haired veteran who realised something had gone wrong with the world when all laws of navigation were upset by a storm that wrecked the yacht's radio and disabled her engines. Meanwhile

JAMES HENRY WENDERBY, twenty-six-year-old millionaire-owner of the *Solar Star*, and his friend,

"TINY" MILTON, gigantic in stature and good nature, and Wenderby's cousin, sinister

DOCTOR GEORGE THORMANSON, whose brilliance as a scientist is outweighed by his greed, are surprised when a 'plane lands to leeward of the yacht, revealing lovely

SALLY ALTON, noted girl flier and one of America's most photographed women, and her secretary,

NINA LENNOX, another beauty. They started out on a long-distance flight, but difficulties in navigation caused by the storm were too much for them, and they were lost when they sighted the yacht. Eventually, the *Solar Star* drifts to the Antarctic continent, where they find themselves in Ooloom, a lost country inhabited by giants who communicate to each other by telepathy. Thormanson, by his greed for diamonds, which are plentiful here, is captured and taken to be sacrificed, followed by Killick and Milton. However, Thormanson escapes and Milton and Killick, pursuing him, discover the source of the diamonds. They receive a warning, that they would be in great danger if they touched one of these precious stones, and they are conducted away from the cave containing the diamonds to the "Mirror of Truth" where "The Mouth of Ooloom"—wise man in this strange country—reveals to them their hearts' desires.

AT first my mental powers were shocked at the evil picture thrown by hypnotic influence upon the "Mirror of Truth," were too horrified to function so that I might hide the foul thing uppermost in my thoughts. From where had come such a fiend to occupy first place in the mind of Samuel Killick? I knew the answer immediately. I was looking upon those hideous features which had once stared out upon the world in the face of the great statue in the temple—the Evil of Ooloom! The evil that once dominated Ooloom still lived on—prisoned by a Power stronger than itself in a little Hell somewhere beyond the cave of diamonds. For the Thing I had seen taking shape in the fearsome passage at the back of the cave was none other than that now depicted for all to see upon the surface of the blue pool.

Helpless, I gazed down upon the revolting picture reflected on the water, and into my shame came a voice of sympathy and comfort from the aged patriarch standing opposite. It seemed to me that I was not wholly to blame for what had happened; rather was I the victim of a power born before the foundation of the world. In fact, this strange gathering by the blue pool had been arranged especially for my benefit, because all the seven priests of Ooloom had feared that the ancient Evil might attempt to take possession of my mind and thus regain its freedom into the world beyond the caves. Thus, repeated warnings of our danger had been sent to us through Aaneen. Now a confident voice urged me to remain calm and unafraid during the process of casting out the evil. . .

The surface of the blue pool reflected a mighty struggle between the opposing powers. I saw the surface of the water ripple over the face of the fiend, saw the bestial features further contorted in a stern fight for supremacy. So intensified became the struggle that the "Mirror of Truth" appeared to boil with the forces exerted by the contestants.

And I knew that the prize was my own soul!

In my helplessness I prayed desperately, and this small effort on my behalf seemed to bear down the scale in my favour. Gradually the surface of the pool became calm and clear, and as it did so another picture took shape there—but whether it was born of my mind, or through the thoughts of the aged patriarch who battled on my own behalf, I do not know. I had a fleeting vision of that awe-inspiring Personality which was the Christ of Ooloom—and then darkness swept over me and I knew no more. . .

Consciousness returned as though ordered by a powerful will, and the seance beside the "Mirror of Truth" ended in a clearly delivered message for us all:

"Strangers from the sea, we have read your hearts and although your manners mystify us, we are happy for your coming. We have read the wonder in your minds concerning us, a wonder that transcends our own for you, and in the short time remaining before your departure we will show you all there is in Ooloom for your enlightenment. Eenoon will be your guide and instructor. Only one among your number has offended us, and we still fear what he might do to unlock the gates of evil in this land which have been fast closed for so long. Guard him well. . . ."

When it was all over at the pool, the others were so anxious to hear about my experiences under the influence of the aged patriarch that the importance of this last warning escaped me entirely. The amazing proofs we had received concerning the mental powers of the Ooloomians were forgotten and only the sensational happenings remembered. I had good reason to curse my own stupidity on this point before all was done.

As soon as we left the blue pool, Eenoon arranged a tour of the country for our benefit and pleasure, and mental messages were sent out for guides to meet us at appointed places. Before we started on the journey, however, Captain John Barley declared he had seen enough of Ooloom to convince him it was no place for a holiday, and he left us to return to his duties aboard the *Solar Star*.

This tour of Ooloom must, at a rough estimate in our own time-scale, have occupied at least two weeks, during which we learned much of what had hitherto been a mystery. Only on the matter of the cave and the diamond-mine were our guides inclined to be reticent. I don't think they themselves knew the whole truth about the place. They went so far as to explain that beyond the cave was a region peopled by spirits who could not leave this earth because of their desire for material things. It was a dark realm below the base of the mountain itself. Legend had it that at the end of the passage where I had so foolishly ventured was a mine with an inexhaustible supply of precious stones, and it was still guarded by the spirits of those who in life prized them above all things.

The great glaciers above the cave of diamonds formed one of the boundaries of Ooloom, and there was no way over them into the country beyond. It was known that the passage from the cave continued right under the mountain range, but no living man had ever dared its dangers to know what might be on the other side. This same group of glaciers ranged around Ooloom in the form of a vast horse-shoe, with the inlet to the sea as the one clear way out of the country.

We found that what might exist over the precipitous mountain ranges—especially the region on the other side of the cave of diamonds—was a matter for much speculation among the people of Ooloom. The general opinion was that nothing but eternal ice and snow—a dead world of intense cold—extended beyond the mountains. There seemed to be no urge to explore these secret places, for the Ooloomians were a supremely happy and contented people whose real interests were outside the material world.

Their own aims and aspirations were for the most part in direct opposition to those of the great and restless civilisation

A smashing upper-cut caught George Thormanson full on on the mouth. He went down with a crash that must have jarred every nerve in his body

outside its borders, where people were mainly concerned with the acquisition of material wealth—where a knowledge of spiritual things was regarded with suspicion. In Ooloom it seemed that these big, silent folk lived very closely to the Unseen, that the spiritual realm was known to them in a manner beyond our understanding. But in regard to the popular theory about what might exist over the mountains which guarded the cave of diamonds, I noticed that while none of the priests denied this idea of a dead world, they were careful not to confirm it.

We found the most interesting feature of Ooloom to be the wonderful series of caves which honeycombed the base of her mountains, and these were warmed in some mysterious manner by volcanic activity. The section of caves occupied by the women were decorated with furs and were scrupulously clean. Here we saw several babies, born in the last period of darkness, as well as many children of all ages up to the adolescent stage.

In an open, moss-covered spot among a circle of rocks we came across these same children undergoing a course of instruction from one of the aged priests. Each child sat stiffly upright upon a folded fur rug, and amid a brooding silence lessons were given by mental telepathy. On this occasion, too, we heard the Ooloomians sing for the first time—and it was the queerest idea of music I have ever heard.

They began to croon the "O-o-o-o-o-o" chorus, and we could not stay long enough for them to reach the next stage of their song.

The aged people of Ooloom were also inclined to keep together in a particular series of caves, and it was significant that near these was the place through which their mortal remains departed from the world. There was no form of burial in this country, but a natural crematorium awaited the dead—a long, steeply sloping shaft in the floor of a lower cavern down which the body slid into subterranean fires. I also learned that the sorrow and lamentation which usually accompany the last rites in our own world were unknown in Ooloom. In fact, I had the impression that the "dear departed" were considered to be lucky people!

These Ooloomians had at least the courage of their convictions in regard to the future life. They believed in a much more important state of existence after death, and had an insight into this future state which they were reluctant to discuss with people so uninstructed as ourselves. Centuries of a long lifetime were spent in preparation and silent communication with the Unseen.

From Eenoon's description we learned that his people lived in the most simple and primitive fashion, and on a moral plane far above that of the outside world. All their lives they were concerned chiefly with spiritual pursuits, and had no thought or ambition for those luxuries which have now become necessities in our civilisation. Never have I met with people so fearless of life, so confident in themselves. There was evidence to show they held natural secrets which were jealously guarded. I often think now of how much sorrow might have been averted for many people if nothing had happened to force a manifestation of those fearful powers at the disposal of the Ooloomians. At least six men would be alive and well to-day who met their fate in Ooloom. Tiny Milton's parents would not be sorrowing in their old age for a son. . . .

But let these things come in their proper sequence.

We had, as I have already intimidated, spent about a fortnight visiting many places of interest in Ooloom, and in studying the manners, customs, and philosophy of the people. Jimmy Wenderby was talking about the return voyage to New York, and we were all feeling that our stay among the friendly giants was drawing to its close when Eenoon appeared with a message which set me wondering. A message from the *Solar Star* awaited us at the first series of caves along the ancient road to the sea. According to Eenoon the messenger seemed to be very agitated, and anxious to see us as quickly as we could reach him. He feared to penetrate farther into the country alone, especially after a mental examination which had left him in a state of sheer panic.

"This means that the repairs are completed, and old John is ready to start," Jimmy Wenderby said. "We'd better begin saying 'good-bye' to the big boys around here."

It happened that I was looking at Tiny Milton while Jimmy spoke, and I saw him turn quite pale.

"What's the matter, Tiny?" I asked. "You look pretty sick at the idea of going home. . . ."

He made a quick gesture for silence, and spoke in low tones to Jimmy Wenderby. "You're in no great hurry for a few hours, I suppose?"

"Of course not," Jimmy said. "What's the matter, Tiny?"

"I'll tell you everything after I've had an interview with the old boy they call the 'Mouth of Ooloom,'" Tiny said slowly. "Everything, as far as I'm concerned, depends on his decision. I must see Aaneen about it right away. But first I'll come with you to hear the news from the ship. It seems strange to me that John Barley didn't come along himself. He promised to return here, and take his leave of the big people."

On the way to meet the messenger we called in at the women's quarters to pick up Sally and Nina. Then we set out along the road leading to the logan-stone. I saw the messenger in the distance, and recognised him as the First Officer. He stood in the middle of the road, waving his hand at us. At a signal from me he began running towards us, and even at a distance I could sense trouble. He came on with a rush, and did not stop running until we were face to face.

"Mr. Wenderby!" he began breathlessly "The captain would like to see you aboard at once. He thinks there's trouble brewing down there, sir!"

"Trouble?" Jimmy said in bewilderment.

"I guess so! A strange yacht threw her hook alongside us, and Mr. Thormanson knew all about her. He ran away from

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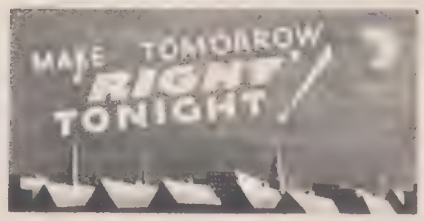

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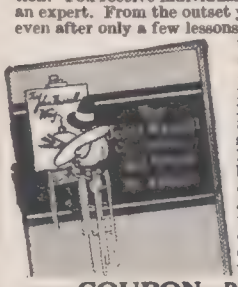

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us and is aboard the stranger right now. As soon as he saw the move Captain Barley sent me along to find you. The captain's found out that the radio has been at work for some time without his knowledge. Amos has been sending and receiving messages for Mr. Thormanson!"

"So that's why he went back to the ship so willingly," I said. "Now what's the big idea?"

"Let's get back," Jimmy urged. "I'll settle with George for this if it s the last thing I do!"

"A moment, Jim," Tiny called after him. "I'm staying on here until you come back. You can't go off without . . ."

"That's O.K.," Jimmy agreed. "We'll be seeing you. Come on, Sam."

As I moved off after him Tiny caught me by the arm. "There's trouble down there, Sam!" he whispered fiercely. "Just for safety sake I'll follow on later, and take a peep through the logan-stone. So long!"

We had just emerged on the other side of the logan-stone when the first shock came. I was the last to pass the swinging-stone, and hardly was I through when out of the shadows a figure moved up swiftly behind me. In a flash I was round and facing him staring into the barrel of a rifle.

"Straight on, you!" a strange voice said crisply. "Keep moving!"

As the man with the rifle stepped out of the shadows I saw a sun-tanned, bearded face with small dark eyes staring back at me steadily. There was a hard expression in those beady eyes which told me that argument might not be healthy at the moment. Without a word, I turned slowly and followed after Jimmy Wenderby and the two girls. At the foot of the gangway leading on to the deck of the *Solar Star* stood another man armed with a rifle, and on deck I saw George Thormanson standing close to Captain Barley. Looking beyond the *Solar Star* I saw another trim, white-painted yacht of about our own tonnage.

When he reached the deck Jimmy Wenderby held a whispered conversation with the two girls, and they both made for the saloon stairs. No sooner were they below than he turned and walked toward George Thormanson. George came forward with a smile, as though ready to explain, but he never had the chance to do so. As he came within distance, Jimmy's left fist shot out in a smashing upper-cut which caught George full on the mouth. He went down with a crash which must have jarred every bone in his body.

"I've been waiting to do just that for a long time," Jimmy said, calmly. "Clear these friends of yours off the *Solar Star* right now, George, and get out yourself. What the hell do you mean by bringing strangers aboard this ship without my permission?"

That was typical of Jimmy Wenderby when his temper got away with him, and I couldn't help admiring the strong line he was taking at the start. But it was all wrong, as the next few seconds proved. George Thormanson scrambled to his feet, spitting teeth and blood, and as he did so a stranger standing behind Jimmy raised the heavy six-shooter by the barrel. I saw the idea before his arm was ready, and landed a running kick just before the blow met Jimmy's unprotected head. In a moment we were all mixed up and fighting.

Now fighting, especially the rough-house variety, is a thing I can deplore and also enjoy. It always has a strange fascination for me. Jimmy turned upon the man who had so nearly brought him down. So I punched at George Thormanson with everything I had—and missed him completely!

The next moment I took a punch to the jaw which sent the whole landscape reeling. The force of my fall knocked the breath clean out of me, and I knew then that the fight was over. Two men dragged me to my feet, thrust me up against the deck-house beside Jimmy Wenderby. George Thormanson came forward, wiping blood from his mouth with a handkerchief.

"Another show-down like this one," he said savagely, "and I won't be responsible for what happens. We don't want to hurt anybody here, but we're determined to take what we want from those big freaks over yonder. I'm telling you straight out that what we want are diamonds."

"You yellow thief!" Jimmy hissed at him.

"Not so yellow as you imagine," George said ominously. "Thief—well, maybe. Those giants have no use for diamonds, and I guess we can do with all we can take away. But the most important thing is the mine. I never went beyond the cave, because Milton and Killick were too close on my track, but these gentlemen here, have come all the way from Cape Town to take a close look at it. They are all experts. Most of our money is in diamond shares, and you must know that a mine of any size and quality outside our control might have serious consequences on the market. We must have a look at the mine before we know the extent of our danger. If it's possible to come to an understanding with the giants about working the mine we're ready to make a bargain with full legal protection on both sides."

"How did these gangsters of yours know where to find us?" Jimmy demanded.

"Your wireless operator sent out a message in code for me two weeks ago," Thormanson explained, "and my message was relayed to a place where they know how to guard and regulate the diamond market. That's all you're going to know, Jimmy. From now on you do as you are told until our business here is over. We are all armed, and determined men. Start something, and—cousin or no cousin—I'll shoot to kill!"

During this pleasant conversation I had time to look round and observe the opposition. I had to admit at once that it was formidable. The strange yacht near the *Solar Star*, anchored in mid-stream so that it blocked the passage, was named the *Lydenburg*. There were five men, including the guard at the logan-stone, menacing us with rifles, and they were certainly a tough crowd. They all took things very easily, and seemed content to let Thormanson do the talking. I noticed, too, that the crew of the *Lydenburg* took little or no interest in the proceedings. The same could not be said of Captain John Barley and his men, who were standing around like men waiting for the word to start a fight.

"For the last time, Mr. Thormanson," John Barley said savagely, "I'm asking you and your friends to leave this ship. It's an act of piracy. . . ."

"Take care you'll be alive to prove it, Barley," Thormanson warned him. Then his expression changed, and when he spoke again there was a steely ring in his voice. "I don't see Milton among you," he went on. "I suppose you left him behind with that big wench?"

"That's your danger, George," I said impressively. "While Tiny Milton is running free your life's not worth a scotch and soda. He has a gun—your gun!—and there are two cartridges saved in case he happens to miss you the first time."

I saw his eyes narrow at this information, and wondered whether I'd been wise to say my piece. It seemed to bring him to a quick decision, for Thormanson walked over to consult with a little man guarding us from behind the deck-house. Then the three strangers got together, and, led by Thormanson, moved to the head of the gangway. On shore again he turned to give us a last warning.

"Don't attempt to follow us," he said darkly. "The only way into Ooloom is through that swinging-stone, and the man who guards it has orders to stop at nothing if he's challenged. So long!"

We watched the guard at the foot of the gangway walk on behind the party—saw five armed men pass out of sight through the opening, leaving one man to guard this vital spot. Then a babel of voices broke out and everybody had advice for Jimmy Wenderby.

I walked forward to where John Barley stood giving his considered opinion to Jimmy, and drew them both firmly aside. "Come downstairs into the saloon," I said softly, "and don't call before you've seen all your cards, Jimmy."

While the steward served out three stiff whiskies and sodas, I opened out with the news. "That guy guarding the logan-stone is due for one big surprise at any time now," I said. "Tiny Milton is on the prowl, and is sure to take a chance at him—rifle or no rifle! I suggest that you have a man watching that logan-stone from now on, John. Another thing is just how many guns do we possess?"

"I have a Colt and a box of ammunition in my cabin," John Barley answered. "You're welcome to the loan of it, Mr. Killick."

"And Sally Alton carries a dangerous little iron," I reminded Jimmy.

He went off to find Sally at once, and presently returned to the saloon followed by the two girls. Jimmy was having a hard job to persuade them to remain behind if an opportunity came for us to re-enter Ooloom.

"I can shoot a gnat's eye out with this," Sally informed us, as she toyed with a very useful weapon.

"And one tap on the ankle would bring you down," I said grimly. "We'd have a passenger on our hands then, Sally. Don't make it harder for us to beat this gang of thieves. We simply must go after them, and prevent what harm we can coming to the big people. It's through us that this has happened."

"But they're all armed with rifles, Sam," Nina protested, "and there're other men aboard the ship that brought them here."

"We'll take care of that crowd, Miss," old John promised grimly.

"After all," I pointed out, "we're far from being in a hopeless state, and neither are the giants if Tiny has warned them of what to expect. In fact, I don't fancy Thormanson's chances at all in that diamond-mine. There's something about that mine beyond human experience. But before we do anything I'd like to hear your story, John."

"That's soon told," he said. "I wrung the truth out of young Amos before the others came aboard to protect him. As soon as I saw Mr. Thormanson hail the *Lydenburg* as though he knew all about her I guessed what must have happened. They had the radio working, and nobody else aboard knew anything about it. Amos was promised a fortune in diamonds for keeping the secret, and he has been sending and receiving messages for Mr. Thormanson ever since you left the ship."

"I keep thinking of them as prospective meals"

"Where's Amos now?"

"Aboard the *Lydenburg*. Mr. Thormanson knew that nobody else here on the *Solar Star* could use the radio. He made Amos dismantle the set before he left the ship."

"Then we're no better off than when we arrived here," Jimmy said.

"Not exactly, sir. The repairs to our propellor-shaft are completed, and the *Solar Star* is ready to make steam and clear out as soon as you give the word. If the crew of the *Lydenburg* think they've blocked the fairway they're mistaken. I've had soundings taken from shore to shore of this inlet, and I can assure you there is enough passage for us."

Jimmy shook his head. "We can't clear out and leave this gang of thieves to rob those helpless people in Ooloom. Besides, Tiny Milton is still . . ."

A revolver-shot rang out faintly across the inlet, was followed by a hoarse shout and the clatter of heavy feet down the saloon stairs. The door of the saloon was flung open to admit an excited first officer.

"The man guarding the swinging-stone, sir! Somebody has shot him!"

We were all on deck a few moments later, watching Tiny Milton—with the sentry's rifle and a belt of ammunition under his arm—making the best of his way down the sloping, rocky road toward the gangway. The crew of the *Lydenburg* had heard the shot, too, and were crowding the fore-deck to stare at us.

Tiny Milton's face was set sternly as he strode up the gangway. He first approached the rail to speak with the *Lydenburg's* crew.

"There's one of your party who needs attention over there!" he shouted. "I've drilled a little hole in his leg, and pinched his gun. That's all. If anyone cares to bar the way through that passage after you've picked him up I'm ready to oblige again."

He lifted the rifle suggestively, opened the breech, and inserted another cartridge. Then he turned to me.

"I've warned the big people through Eenoon, Sam," he continued. "There's no time to loose if we're going to prevent wholesale murder. . . ."

In a moment the crew were swarming round us, offering to make up a rescue party into Ooloom. But on this point Jimmy Wenderby was very firm.

"I didn't engage you to risk your lives in a dog-fight," he said. "There are three of us, well armed—and all the giants in Ooloom. If you would like to support me, guard the *Solar Star* while we're away." He jerked a thumb toward the *Lydenburg*, and the crew shouted their agreement and approval at him.

"Another scotch and soda before we start the war wouldn't be out of place," I said. "I'm sure Tiny could do with . . ."

"You bet I could!" Tiny agreed. "I've just remembered I'm hungry."

Down in the saloon again we heard Tiny Milton's story.

He had been suspicious from the moment he heard the messenger's story, and followed us at a distance. From behind the logan-stone he had spotted the armed sentry, guessed the real state of affairs aboard the ship, and bolted back to the first series of caves to warn Eenoon. The big people were not unduly alarmed to learn how firearms functioned, but the whole nation was warned through the mental powers of the "Mouth of Ooloom." After promising to return with help, Tiny again approached the logan-stone. With his usual cunning, he first set the great stone moving to encourage the man on the other side. When the guard walked through to satisfy his curiosity, Tiny promptly put a bullet through the man's leg and wrenched the rifle from his hands.

"The question now," I remarked gloomily, "is how we're going to tackle five men armed with long-range rifles."

"Not out in the open," Tiny said definitely. "They could pick us off one by one at that game. Our only chance, Sam, apart from what the Ooloomians may do, are the caves—and an ambush. We can arrange it better when we get there."

Ten minutes later we were back again at the logan-stone, and pushing it very cautiously in case a guard happened to be waiting on the other side. But the way into Ooloom was clear—the ancient road down to the caves deserted when we set out after George Thormanson and his diamond merchants.

NEXT WEEK
The Diamond Cross

YOU HAVE ONLY TO ASK

Continued from page 7

He nodded numbly.

"Well, don't stand there like an owl. Haven't you got anything to say?"

"No, Aunt Hetty."

What was it possible that he could say to her? Porthryn was an accursed place upon which the wrath of God had fallen. How could he tell her this and how at times in his troubled dreams he could hear again the holy man's voice, reverberating in high, challenging tones out of that deep black hole of a grave, where the flesh lay rotting on his broken bones? Nor could he explain that in his terror and loneliness he had weaved such legends of green fields and mellow pastures, such blossoming of cherry trees and colouring of sunlit distant hills, at the coming of Cousin Roger.

That afternoon he left the house in the Square and for the first time since that fatal morning made his way to the derelict factory. He crept in, between the slag heaps, shuddering as he went, till he came to the yard itself. There he paused trembling, while the icy wind howled through the shattered fabric of the girders.

Colley clenched his small fists and stepped up the site of the well, now heavily covered with planking.

He was glad they had covered the place in. He could not have borne to have looked into those dreadful depths. As he fell on his knees a gust of wind yelled amongst the stanchions and the tall crumbling chimneys.

"Please forgive them," said Colley and his voice was choking. "They didn't mean it. They didn't know you'd fall down there. And everything you've said has come true. The men have come back and there isn't enough food in Porthryn. It's right that should be so, for what they did to you. But, please forgive them. And please let me go away from Porthryn. *Please*, let me go. You told me to ask and so I'm asking now. *Please*, blind man, *please* let me go!"

He wrung his hands in his agony.

"Please, let me go."

Then the wind dropped and the first big flakes of snow began to fall; and there was no sound of rattling iron and whistling wind, only a deep solemn silence as the snow grew thicker and thicker, turning the blackened skeleton of the factory into a white temple with airy spires and sugar-coated, fantastic buildings.

The storm was at its height when Cousin Roger arrived. His first words were that it was a wonder he'd got there at all and he was mighty certain he couldn't stay for long. It was the wickedest winter weather he'd ever seen.

Cousin Roger was just what Colley had imagined he would be like. His face was red and his eyes twinkled and his hand was big and warm, for all its rough skin. Colley could see him at once, moving amongst his cows and sheep and horses, making clever clucking noises with his lips, patting animals on the back and viewing the brimming pails of milk. He addressed Colley as "young fellar-me-lad," and rumpled his hair, so that Colley clung to Roger's jacket, till Aunt Hetty ordered him not to mess their cousin about, so that Colley went and sat on a box in the corner and swung his legs with anxiety.

Cousin Roger looked round the room and then fixed his gaze on Aunt Hetty.

"They be hard times, hereabout, I've no doubt," he said.

Aunt Hetty stirred uneasily.

"We've seen better," she said. "Haven't we, Colley, dear?"

Colley gazed at her, awe-struck at the term of her address, till he caught her sudden scowl and the flash of her black eyes. He nodded meekly.

"But you're managing?" asked Cousin Roger.

"Just managing," said Aunt Hetty.

The talk turned to other things of past days and what a long time it was since they'd met; of how farming wasn't what it was, but better than the state of things which Cousin Roger had seen hereabout.

Colley listened to it all in a torment of impatience. The minutes were slipping by and soon Cousin Roger would have to go, and still he'd not asked the question as to whether he would take Colley away with him.

At last Cousin Roger said he intended to breed horses, chiefly for a hobby but hoping to show a profit.

"Then we'd have a pony for Colley to ride when he comes and stays with us."

Aunt Hetty smiled weakly and her eyes slewed round in Colley's direction. But Colley's heart was hammering in his chest. He clutched the sides of the box in his excitement and his legs stopped their swinging. Then, the door opened and Mr. Llewellyn put his head round.

Aunt Hetty took advantage of the situation at once. She called Mr. Llewellyn in and with a good deal of pride, introduced Cousin Roger. The fact of possessing this rich relation would no doubt have its effect on her landlord. Mr. Llewellyn was in the mood to be friendly. He had just blundered through the storm, from the public house in the Square and the liquor made him mellow. Moreover, many years before he had visited Devonshire and he grew garrulous, remembering landmarks and places.

The clock on the mantelpiece ticked away and the sound was louder than the voices that filled the room, and Colley felt a tightness gathering in his throat and there was a pain in his chest. He had taken hold of his knees with both hands and was pinching them in this awful torture of delay. Cousin Roger, ignoring the tin clock, pulled a great, round gold watch out of his pocket.

"My word, but I must go!" he cried.

Colley's mouth went dry and his tongue felt like a piece of wood. He wanted to call out very loudly, but he couldn't speak at all. Cousin Roger rose laboriously to his feet and his shadow wheeled across the room, filling Colley's corner, so that Colley felt himself to be immersed suddenly in a sea of shadow. He slipped off the box as Cousin Roger shook hands with Mr. Llewellyn and Aunt Hetty.

"I shall stay the night at Llangelly," said Cousin Roger. "I shall leave in the morning for the west."

He nodded across at Colley, who lurked in the shadow.

"Any time the boy wants to come to me, let him come," he said. "And for as long as he likes."

He'd said it! He'd said it! At the very last moment, he'd said it. Colley could hardly breathe, so fast was his heart beating.

"But," said Cousin Roger, "if he wants to stay on here, I'll still continue your weekly allowance, Hetty."

Colley started forward. This was no time for arguing now. Cousin Roger had given the invitation and it must be accepted without delay. The golden gates were open, it was only necessary to step through, to pass that threshold to the promised land. Then, on the instant, Aunt Hetty's ponderous figure had swiftly moved, so that she stood between Colley and Cousin Roger. Her hands were held out behind her, the palms facing Colley, as if she would snatch at him with her terrible hands should he attempt to brush past her. And she was talking loudly, rapidly; thanking Cousin Roger for all his kindness and goodwill, but assuring him, assuring him again and again that she could never bear to part with the boy. Then they all began to speak together with Mr. Llewellyn chipping in and Cousin Roger excusing himself once more that time should be so pressing, and edging to the door.

They were gone before Colley realised it. One moment they were all jabbering together and the next they were in the narrow passage outside. As he ran across the room, the door closed in his face, and the latch clicked. He tugged at the latch and prised it up and he was sobbing uncontrollably.

"Cousin Roger," he cried. "Take me away . . . take me away. . . . ."

The wind under the eaves howled like a dog. Colley pressed against the door and it gave a little, then would move no further, so that he knew Aunt Hetty had her stolid back against it. He beat with his hands on the tough plank panels, but the wind shouted again and the window panes rattled in a violent gust. Then he heard the front door bang and the thin walls shook.

He turned and ran to the window and tore aside the soiled curtain. The pane

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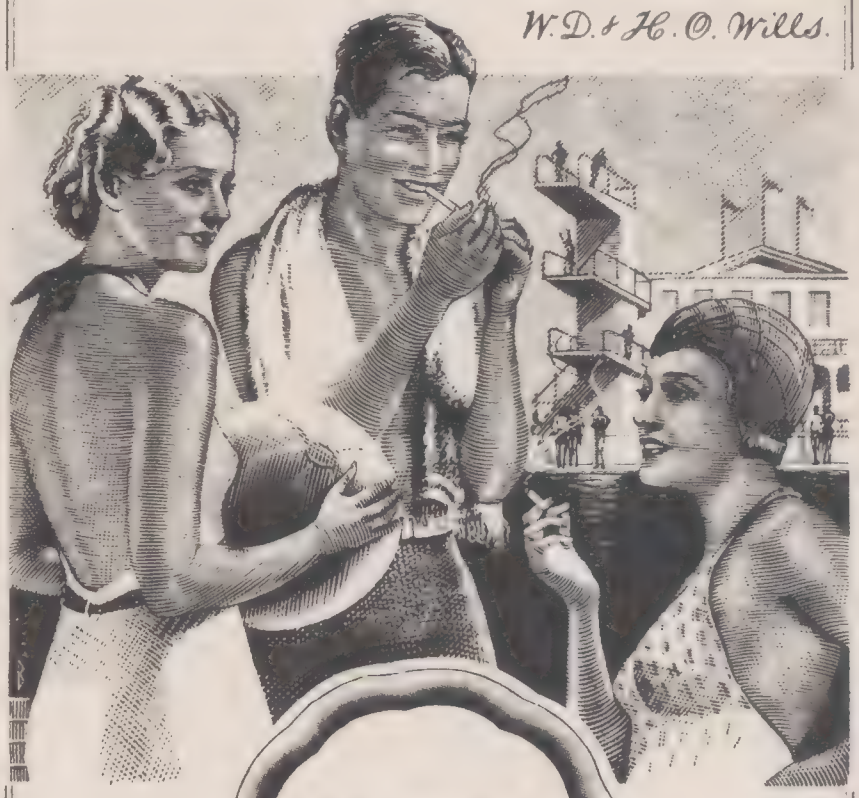

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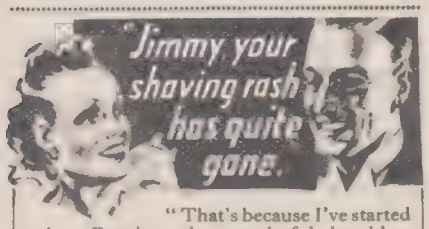

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were plastered with snow and the bitter air whined through the old and loosened sash. He groped for the catch and found it locked fast, and bound with string. He clawed at the string, but the knot was hard with the wet leakings through the sash and his finger-tips were like putty against steel wire. He began to whimper and took no heed of his broken finger-nails. Then a shadow fell across the snow-whitened window panes and he turned to find Aunt Hetty watching him.

She was standing in the middle of the room, her hands clasped before her, head on one side, her feet a little apart. She was smiling, but it wasn't a real smile, only her big, full mouth was curved in her big, round, white face.

"Such going on," she said. "I *am* surprised."

Colley cowered against the wall, watching her for the next movement. He thought: If I had a stone in my hand I would throw it into her wicked face and kill her. Kill her. But for all his hate his legs were trembling so that he could hardly stand and he was sick with the nausea of hate and fear.

Her black eyes wandered round the room, to the nail where the strap hung. Then they dropped lazily, almost gently, on Colley again.

"A wicked boy," she said softly, "a wicked boy, that's what you are. An ungrateful, wicked boy. I can't think what Cousin Roger thinks of you. To want to leave a good home. I heard you shouting through the door."

"Did Cousin Roger hear?" cried Colley.

"Oh, no!" she said. "Cousin Roger didn't hear—but *I* did."

Colley closed his eyes. No death could be worse than this, facing Aunt Hetty in this cell of a room in this God-accursed town. He thought: If she kills me, I'll go where the blind man is. He wouldn't come to me, but I can go to him. He could feel the cold draught through the window behind him and the coldness seemed to flow into him, into his veins and into his head and into his heart. He opened his eyes and saw again the vast looming figure of Aunt Hetty. And suddenly he felt quite brave, as if the coldness had inspired him.

"It's you, who are wicked," he said. "You hate me, but you keep me here because Counsin Roger pays you."

Her mouth fell wide open with astonishment.

"Fetch the strap," she said quietly.

"Fetch it yourself," said Colley and his voice was shrill, "and I hope you kill me, because then I'll go where the blind man's gone."

She stared at him, puzzled, despite her fury.

"What blind man?" she said.

"You *know*," said Colley. "You turned him away and beat me when I wanted to help him. And the boys stoned him and killed him. You know who I mean. But he's my friend and he'll come for you." His voice rose, breaking in hysteria "He'll come for you."

She drew in her breath deeply.

"Now . . . now, Colley," she said.

"When the blind man comes. . . ."

"Such childishness," she said. "Now quiet yourself, my boy, before my temper goes. Come now."

"Go away," said Colley. "I hate you."

The blood mounted up in her forehead. Her shoulders shook with rage.

"Very well," she said. "Very well, my master, we'll see."

But she was frightened. She had never before seen him possessed of such dauntless courage. Gone was his submissiveness, that resignation upon which she had battened. It was as if some spirit, other than his own, possessed him. She moistened her lips, this time not with relish, but because they were dry from the strange terror that possessed her.

"Now be a good boy, Colley——"

He made no answer, but his eyes were steady on her, burning, burning.

"We'll make some tea, Colley——"

A gust of wind leaped up on the window. It blew with a dreadful fury for fully half a minute. The flame of the lamp blew raggedly against the lamp-glass, blackening it. Then as suddenly as it had arisen the wind dropped. The silence was intense. She must make up her mind. She must make up her mind at once. There mustn't be another moment's delay. This was a crisis. Her undisputed authority of eleven years was at stake.

Something tapped at the window pane.

She heard it quite plainly: Colley heard it. He moved to one side, gazing at the window. She could not move, only stand in the middle of the room and stare and stare.

The sound came again. Tap . . . tap . . . tap. . . .

She swallowed, gasping for breath. She could see the snow plastered on the outside of the glass. There was a little black patch in the centre pane with the black night showing through. It hadn't been there a second ago. . . .

Tap . . . tap . . . the bleak patch was growing bigger, as if—she drew in her breath harshly—as if someone's finger were there tapping, or the point of a stick.

"I knew he'd come," said Colley quietly. "I told you so."

Then he was across the room at the door.

"Where are you going?" she said. "Oh God, where are you going?"

"To let him in," said Colley.

"No" she said. "No——"

But he was gone. She heard his footsteps clattering in the passage. The terror was in her, so she could not move. She heard the rattling of the chain of the front door. The tapping at the window came again, louder, more persistent. The black patch was widening. It was a few inches wide now and something was moving within the frame of snow. She began to whimper. The front door opened with a bang. She heard Colley calling.

"Oh! God have mercy on me," she said.

She fell on her knees babbling, covering her face with her hands.

"There's no one there," said Colley. He was in the room again, puzzled and a little scared.

"I opened the door and called," he said. "There wasn't anyone there."

Her hands fell from her face.

"No one there?" she repeated.

She struggled to her feet, her hand at her heart. She walked slowly, her footsteps dragging to the door of her own room. There, she leant against the wall, panting.

"I can't understand it," said Colley. "We both heard—him—didn't we?"

She gulped.

"It was the wind, Colley——"

"Oh, no!" said Colley calmly, "I'm sure it wasn't the wind."

Tap . . . tap . . . tap . . . there it was again, Loud and clear and at the window. Colley sprang for the latch.

"The string," he said, "it's tied too tight."

"No," she cried. "No, Colley—not that."

But he had snatched a knife from the table and he went back at the window again, slashing at the knot. She screamed as she heard the click of the window-latch, and as she saw him raise the window, then with her last strength, she flung open the door of her own room and tottered in.

Colley could hear her bolting herself in, as he raised the sash. A heap of snow fell on the sill and the wind blew his hair back from his forehead. Then out of the darkness before him, a more solid portion of darkness detached itself. Its yellow beak gleaming, the blackbird hopped into the room.

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Colley shut the window and brushed his hands free of the snow. There was no sound anywhere, but the scratching of the bird's claws as it pattered across the floor and hopped on to the table. It ruffled its feathers and shook its wings, then it hopped closer to the warmth of the lamp.

"Poor thing," said Colley and approached it. He touched its glossy head, and then picked it up in his arms. It nestled against him trembling.

"It's only a bird, Aunt Hetty, driven in by the storm."

There came no answer from the next room. He called again, his mouth to the keyhole, then listened. He could hear a faint moaning.

"Frightened of a bird," he said contemptuously. Well, it served her right. She was a beast and it jolly well served her right. He turned to find Mr. Llewellyn standing by the table, his eyes glassy, a foolish grin upon his face.

"Wha's matter," asked Mr. Llewellyn. He was comfortably drunk.

"Nothing's the matter," said Colley.

"Heard a yell," said Mr. Llewellyn. "Disturbed me. Come downstairs. Wha's that you got?"

"It's a tame blackbird," said Colley.

"Pretty," said Mr. Llewellyn. "Pretty lil' bird. Whose is it?"

"Mine," said Colley.

"Tha' so?" presMr. Llewellyn. "I like birds. Keep 'em in a cage. Suppose I have that bird? Nice lil' bird. Tweet! Tweet!"

"It's my bird now," said Colley. "I think it was sent to me."

"Here you are," said Mr. Llewellyn. He laid the coins on the table. "Give you five shillings for it. Nice lil' bird. Hand it over."

He took the creature from Colley. arms.

"I'll look after you," he said.

He wavered past Colley into the passage.

"Mr. Llewellyn!"

"Well, my boy?"

"What's the fare to Llangelly?"

"Five bob," said Mr. Llewellyn. "Goo' night."

"Good night," said Colley.

There was quite a crowd round the station when he reached it. A tall young man in spectacles was writing in a note book. An official-looking person in a big coat was at his side. The women with their shawls held close about their heads shaking off the snow were chattering like a lot of jays. Colley bought his ticket.

"Return?"

"No," said Colley.

He moved on to the platform. From the signal box a bell rang, tingling. A porter began to shout: "Cardiff . . . Llangelly." The lights of the last train came in sight as it rounded the bend. Two women passed by Colley. They were sobbing. Colley caught the words: "God in His Mercy, be praised."

He stared after the women, then he plucked at the porter's sleeve.

"What's happened, mister?" asked Colley.

"That old fellow," said the porter, "what got stones thrown at him and fell down Nicholson's well . . . the papers have got hold of the story. Funny the way things go. People in London have been hearing more of Porthryn through that old chap than ever they did through them foolish hunger-marchers. There's a relief fund been formed, food coming, and clothes and boots . . . that's why they're crying, son. God's mercy takes some folks that way. . . . Cardiff, Llangelly . . . here's your train."

The sheets were cool and soft. It was funny to sleep in sheets. For a long time he'd not been able to sleep for the feel of them. Now it was morning, and the sweet feel of them was still there. The light was strong on his face; bright sunlight through a window. He jumped out of bed and looked out.

There had been a frost and the cherry tree beneath the window was glittering as if it were covered with tinsel. Soon, in a few months' time, it would be fragrant with bloom. Nearby he could hear the lowing of cattle, and over the red roof of the distant barn, he could see a range of little hills, dappled grey and blue in the early light. Then he heard Cousin Roger's voice calling to his dog. He could hear the dog barking. He tip-toed back to his bed. There was a faint smell of cooking bacon coming up from the floor below. He knelt by the bed, his head pressed against the patch-work quilt. "Our Father. . . ."

THE FLYING YORKSHIREMAN

Continued from page 17

"Why, nowt," he said. "Ah were just sayin' to mysen, Ah sez: 'Ah'll just give Mully's boots a bit of a blacking and get 'em right nice and shiny the way she likes 'em.'"

"Nivver mind soft-soaping ma about ma boots. What's ta been up to?"

"Why, Ah telled thee, nowt at all," Sam said, innocently.

"Nowt! Then what's twenty newspaper reporters yammering downstairs to see thee for? And what's this?"

She jammed a newspaper under Sam's nose, and there was a picture of his doing the broadjump.

"Why, Ah were just dewing a little bit of athaletics yesterday, as you might say. It ain't a varry good likeness, dosta think?"

Mully grabbed the paper from him.

"Eigh, Sam Small. They'll be cooming fro' Menston for thee ony day now. Ah doan't knaw what's happened to thy yead. A man o' thy age, callorpering and hopping around at athaletics. What in the name o' goodness 'as coom ovver thee o' late?"

"Ah ain't gate a word to say," Sam muttered, stubbornly.

Mully looked at the paper, and then she looked at Sam, squatting there in the closet with her best boots in his hand.

"Sam Small," she said. "Come and sit ovver here o' t' sofa."

Sam did as he was bid.

"Now, lad," she said. "There's summat behind all this. Spit it out. Now what is it?"

Sam looked at Mully, and he swallowed once or twice, and then he decided it was no use lying to Mully.

"Well, Mully," he said. "It's summat like this. Ah found out Ah could fly."

"Tha found what?" Mully asked.

"Fly," he said. "Sitha! Ah'll show thee."

So he took off and did a couple of turns round the room and then glided down on tiptoe beside Mully again.

"Now, tha sees. Ah can fly," he said, triumphantly.

"So tha can," Mully agreed. "And varry nicely tha does it, too. What caps me is that tha didn't tell me about this when tha married me."

"Nay, it nobbut come ovver me lately."

And Sam told her the whole story, about Faith and Mountains, and the truth about the suicide arrest and how he'd met Dickie Hogglethwaite.

"Well, he were a nice sort o' chap, and a Huddersfield lad on top of it, and when he axed me to do soom jumping like, well, it were a chance for him to clean up a few bets."

"Well, there's nowt wrang wi' making a little brass," Mully agreed. "Ah always like to have a sixpence on the Darby mysen, if Ah can. But it seems tha's stirred up summat, what wi' all these newspaper lads downstairs, and a committee o' gentlemen to ax thee to try out for the British Olympic party."

"Well, us can settle all that reight fast," Sam said. "All us has got to do is just explain the truth, like—that Ah'm no athalete, but Ah just did it by flying. Thee just run down and tell 'em while Ah gate these boots blacked nicely for thee. Tell 'em Ah'm sorry Ah hoaxed 'em and there's noa newspaper story for 'em, properly speaking."

Despite the fact that he had made a fortune on his self-doffing spindle, Sam still liked to black boots—especially Mully's. It gave him a great deal of pleasure, putting on the dauby blacking, brushing it off, then taking a nice soft cloth and rubbing and rubbing until the boots were burnished like a glace kid. So he lost himself in the job, feeling sure that Mully with her apt tongue was enough to settle any bunch of reporters.

After lunch, which was sheep's head stew with suet dumplings, with a few side dishes of mashed turnips and pickled beets and fresh doughcake, with curd-lemon-cheese tarts and a pint of ale and a few toasted biscuits and cheddar cheese, Sam took a stroll to sort of ease off his belt a little. The minute he got on the road a young chap came up and said his name was Jim McGillicuddy.

"Is ta a newspaper lad, happen?" Sam a[illegible]

The young man said he would tell the truth, he was.

Sam went on walking up the hill, beside the orange grove with the irrigation standpipes neatly between each row of trees, and the young chap walked beside him, explaining that he had to have a good story. If he didn't get a good story he would be ruined. Really he was only starting in as a reporter, so he wanted a really good story.

All the other chaps had gone back to write a funny story on what Mully had said, but he wanted a story from Sam himself and that's why he waited around.

"Well, there's nowt moar to it," Sam said. "Ah can fly, that's all."

"Fly?"

"Aye!"

"You mean, in an airplane?"

"Nay, just on me own hook."

The chap didn't say anything for a while and they went on walking in step.

"Well, Mr. Small," he said, slowly, "I don't want to trouble you too much, but—if you're in the mood now—would you mind just—flying?"

"Surely, lad," Sam said. "Here's a nice bit of a place here."

So he went over to where the road was near the slope of the canyon and took off. He did a turn or two over the canyon, circled over the edge of the Rogers' ranch, glided back and came neatly to earth beside the reporter.

"Holy jumped-up Gees!" the young man said. "Holy jumped-up Gees!"

Then he went off running down the road.

"Another balmy Yankee," Sam said to himself.

He went on up into the hills, leaving the places where the automatic lawns lay neat, and then coming to a sort of hilly desert land where the sage-brush and tumble-weed and cactus grew. He went on a path, past this, higher up, and suddenly the land changed again as it does in California, and there Sam found it was exactly like England, with rolling turf-covered crofts and bleak skylines. It was a lonesome place, so Sam took off and had a fine hour, gliding around, catching currents that came up the canyons, and feeling the exaltation of the music on his face.

Then he went home and was just sitting down to tea when the reporter lad showed up.

"Come in," Sam said, in his usual affable way. "Sit thee down and have a little tea."

"No, thanks."

"Eigh, come on," Mully said. "Have a little summat—some shortcake, happen? Or some scones, muffins and raspberry jam, cheese tarts, a little sliced ham or pork pie—or there's a bit o' cold pigeon pie here? Or happen some polony or a bit o' cold finnan haddie here?"

But the lad only shook his head.

"Is ta feeling poorly, lad?" Mully asked.

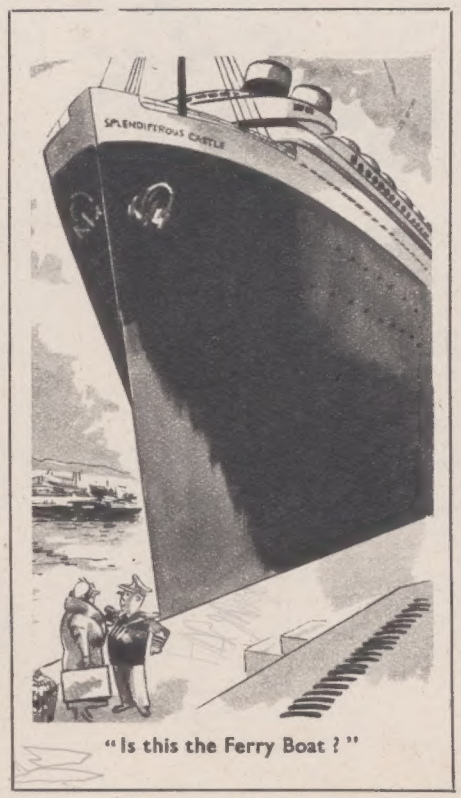
"Aye, what's up?" Sam put in. "Tha looks like tha wished tha'd died when tha had t' measles."

"I got fired."

"Tha gate what?"

"Fired! Bounced! The gate! Discharged!"

"Oh, tha means tha gate t' sack," Sam consoled. "Why, lad, Ah'm that sorry to hear it. Ah thowt Ah'd gi'n thee a reight exclusive story."



"Is this the Ferry Boat?"

"I went back and wrote it," the lad cried. "And they fired me. They said I was drunk on the job. I told them it was the truth—the story I mean. And they were too dumb to believe it. They're just like the guys who got the Kitty Hawk story on the Wright brothers—two sticks on page umpty-nine. And this is bigger than the Wrights! Bigger than the Dionne quintuplets! It's the biggest story the world has ever known. Do you know that?"

"Tha's being varry polite," Mully said.

"I may be drunk or I may be crazy, I definitely am not polite, ever," the young man said. "I do believe I'm nuts, though. Look here, maybe I am, nuts, but would you—that is—if I did see you before, will you do that again—fly?"

"If tha likes," Sam said, not wanting to put himself too much forward.

"No, really. I'd be utterly delighted."

"Righto," Sam said. And he took off in a straight-up Immelman, went round the dining-room, hovered a while over the table and then floated, inch by inch, back into his seat.

"It's that simple," Sam explained.

"Simple!" the chap exploded. "Why, you don't seem to realise that this is the biggest thing in the last fifty centuries of man's progress. Man can fly under his own power. It's big! It's colossal! It's terrific! Why, with me as manager, we'd set the world on fire. We'd make millions!"

"Millions?" Mully asked, getting interested.

"Yes. We'd give exhibitions."

"Think o' that, now," Mully breathed.

"Ah were thinking o' giving an exhibition," Sam said. "Ah were thinking t'other day, that since it were at Sister Minnie's Ah first got t'idea, happen she'd like me to fly so it could be a sort of evidence of what faith'll do, in a manner of speaking."

"Sister Minnie, hell!" the chap said. "You don't think she'd give up the centre of her stage to a man that could fly. No, sir. Look, you sign with me and we'll make a tour—a world tour. . . ."

"Nay, Ah doan't want to mak' no world tour. Ah just made one," Sam moaned, "and Ah doan't want another one only so far as it goas back to Yorksha."

"Sam!" Mully warned.

"Now, Mully—it's ma flying and it's off to be ma judgment on what Ah do wi' it."

"Aye, and it were thy self-doffing spindle, too," Mully rebutted. "But if it had been thy judgment Owdicotts' mill'd still be using it for their own. Whose judgment were it we should gate us a lawyer and sue for our rights? It were mine, weren't it? But for that we'd still be on two pound ten a week as a mill foreman, instead of rich as we are, wouldn't we?"

Sam said nothing.

"When it comes to addling brass, thee leave it to me," Mully said. "Now if a little bit of a thing like flying can mak' us another fortune in America, then us'd be ninnies not to tak' it. Now thee forget t' money end, and me and this young chap will settle everything."

"What about our Vinnie? We're not off to leave her."

"She's gate her own career to think on. Now, Ah fancy she'd be glad to have us goa and clear up her background. Onyhow, when us has made a few millions, us'll come back here and retire."

"Oooah, ma goodness," Sam moaned. "Ah wish Ah were back hoam, Ah do."

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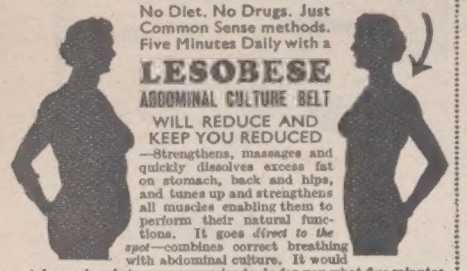

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NEXT WEEK

THERE are some authors who can lift you in the wink of an eye from your favourite arm-chair and drop you plumb in the centre of whatever country they are describing. And their magic is greater than that of any djinn who ever sent a flying carpet careering above the minarets of old Baghdad, for theirs is the greatest magic of all—that of words.

Thus, when you read Sewell Peaslee Wright's story, "Challenge to the Inevitable," you will find yourself transported to the Canadian backwoods. And in that land, where men have not only muscles of steel, but wills of iron, you will witness a struggle that makes the meeting between an immovable post and an irresistible force seem like a petting party.

Now that Radiolympia is in full swing once again, we realise that the really smart set is to be found in W.14 rather than W.1. Everyone seems to be radio-conscious nowadays, and so many sets are in use every day that we sometimes wonder that there are enough waves to go round.

Of course, the B.B.C. does its part in keeping the air well supplied, and from morning to midnight, programmes are being hurled across the ether with a lavish hand. And somewhere in that vast building the new director general, Professor Frederick Wolfe Ogilvie, will be duly installed in his sanctum sanctorum, when he takes over the wheel, the reins, or whatever it is director generals do take over, next October.

A director general's working day is busy and varied, as you will realise when you have read our article on the subject, for in it we tell you what his daily programme is from the time he clocks in to the moment he calls it a day.

In "Big Game," Geoffrey Williamson shows us Professor Sebastian Bliss, jack of all scientific trades, achieving the almost impossible by doing someone else a good turn and profiting by it himself, and Eric Knight continues his remarkable story of "The Flying Yorkshireman," and the country of Ooloom again looms large in the next instalment of W. J. Passingham's serial, "World Without Time."

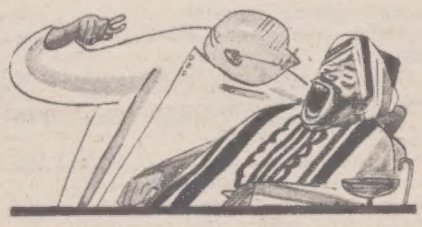
YOU'RE TELLING US!

WE must confess that we have never given any profound thought to the subject of the Dentist—a Man. When twinges of toothache and conscience have caused us to think of him at all, it has been merely as an institution, inevitable as death and taxes, and devised solely for the purpose of extracting molars from our jaw as a preliminary to extracting moneys from our pocket.

Yet it would appear that he is not merely some white-coated Torquemada leading a denturesome life amid the wide open spaces, but an artist and an idealist. Like the gunman, he may be quick on the draw, but unlike him, his soul is not that of a moron, and the word "ethics" suggests more to him than a county in the south-east of England.

In proof of which, here is a dentist—who with true professional reticence begs to remain ours truly, "X. Y. Z."—to speak for the high standard of ethics followed by his fellow dental surgeons. And in doing so he propounds as interesting a problem of the "What-should-A-do-now?" variety as these old eyes have ever read.

"The ruler of a native state in India," he tells us, "was seized by a violent toothache. Being rich beyond the dreams of actresses, the prince promptly wired to Calcutta engaging the services of one of the greatest British dental surgeons for whom he chartered a special train to



enable him to take with him every last piece of his apparatus.

"In due course the dental surgeon arrived, the mysteries of his craft were fitted up in a room at the palace which was converted into an up-to-date surgery, the ruler having settled himself in the chair, opened wider, please, and the dentist got to work.

"The double back tooth that was the cause of the trouble was badly decayed, yet still capable of being saved. Although he exercised all possible care, the dentist could not avoid giving his patient a twinge that contorted his face in pain.

"A small army of courtiers was standing in a respectful semicircle at the back of their illustrious ruler's chair, and one of them, forgetting that he was reflected in a large mirror at the far end of the apartment, could not check a broad grin when his lord and master gave vent to the Pishtu equivalent to 'Ouch!' However, the prince gave no sign of having seen that tactless grin and the work went on smoothly.

"When the tooth had been stopped, the patient thanked the dental surgeon profusely for the good work he had done, adding: 'I am afraid, however, there is yet another task I must ask you to perform.'

"Then calling forward the trembling courtier, he ordered him to sit in the

chair and calmly requested the dentist to pull all the man's teeth. Making the punishment fit the crime was apparently something of a fetish with that prince.

"Now one of the principles most rigidly observed by all good dentists is never to extract teeth that can be saved—and the victim's were enviably white and sound. Like a raw steak, the thing simply isn't done, and the dentist explained at some length that to do as the prince asked would be a violation of professional custom and etiquette.

"However, the victim, flinging himself on his knees before the dentist, implored him to carry on with the bad work, explaining that as he was condemned to lose his teeth he would rather submit to the skilled administrations of the Englishman than be operated on by some ham-handed mahout whose dentistry was confined to pulling elephants' tusks.

"Now here is the problem," declares "X. Y. Z." with gusto. "Should the dentist agree to act unethically by drawing the man's teeth, hoping by so doing to reduce his sufferings to the minimum, or should he refuse to do something that offended his professional conscience, on the chance of being able to convert the prince, who after all was under an obligation to him, to his own standard of ethics?"

Well, there you are. You pays your money and you takes your choice, but for our part we are content to do the modest violet act and leave it to some master-mind to find the correct answer.

To go from one anatomical extreme to another, here is Miss G. Bernayes, of South Yardley, Birmingham, getting all het up about Englishmen's feet. It seems they just won't stand on them in public vehicles when women are strap-hanging. "After experience of American men," she announces, "I am forced to the conclusion that the Englishman is a bit of a lout. He is certainly lacking in manners and chivalry.

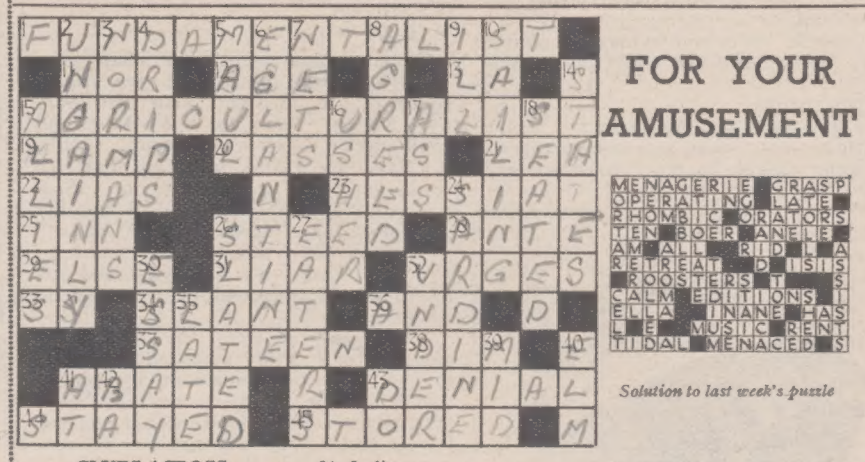
"I wonder if they realise that it would not be considered at all bad-mannered for any man to jerk these sitting louts to their feet by the scruff of the neck. The English idea seems to be that this sort of thing would cause trouble."

Personally we are convinced that the average Englishman is far too kind-hearted to see a woman standing—which is why he hides behind his daily paper so assidulously.

But surely it is a bit illogical to expect the mere male to surrender his seat on every occasion. If what some cynic once called the fair sex believes in women's rights, surely they should be prepared to stand up for them!

YOU'RE TELLING US! Half a guinea is paid for each letter or quotation printed on this page. Address: "Readers' Letters," "Passing Show," 93 Long Acre, London, W.C.2. Please state whether Mr., Mrs., or Miss.

FOR YOUR AMUSEMENT



Solution to last week's puzzle

CLUES ACROSS

1. Gets to foundations presumably.
11. Only half normal.
12. Possibly a period.
13. Half 19 across.
15. Long word for a farmer.
19. Source of light.
20. The girls are here.
21. A constellation.
22. Sail for rock formation.
23. A rough material.
25. House of call.
26. Most likely a horse.
28. Could be neat with a little alteration.
29. Otherwise.
31. Not truthful person.
32. Encourages.
33. A vessel (abbreviation).
34. Incline.
36. Connecting word.
37. Kind of cloth.
38. Not well illuminated.
41. Lessen.
43. Refutation.
44. Remained.
45. Marked or perhaps recorded.

CLUES DOWN

2. Awkward or clumsy.
3. Our conquerors.
4. Perhaps from a leak.
5. Beat or handle roughly.
6. Ton-in gale (anagram).
7. Spread by the fowler of old.
8. Dispute ended.
9. Take this out of the till.
10. Mode of travel.
14. Probably many on the beach.
15. Confederates.
16. We are with her in this.
17. May be a silly one.
18. Perhaps in the chair.
24. Small fish.
26. Covered with special kind of 14.
27. Food-shifters we might say.
30. Attempt.
32. Beneath.
35. 26 down beheaded and curtailed.
39. Half way between extremes.
40. Tree of the field.
41. Implies location.
42. Degree.
43. Perform.

B255 | 14 | L.S. 9

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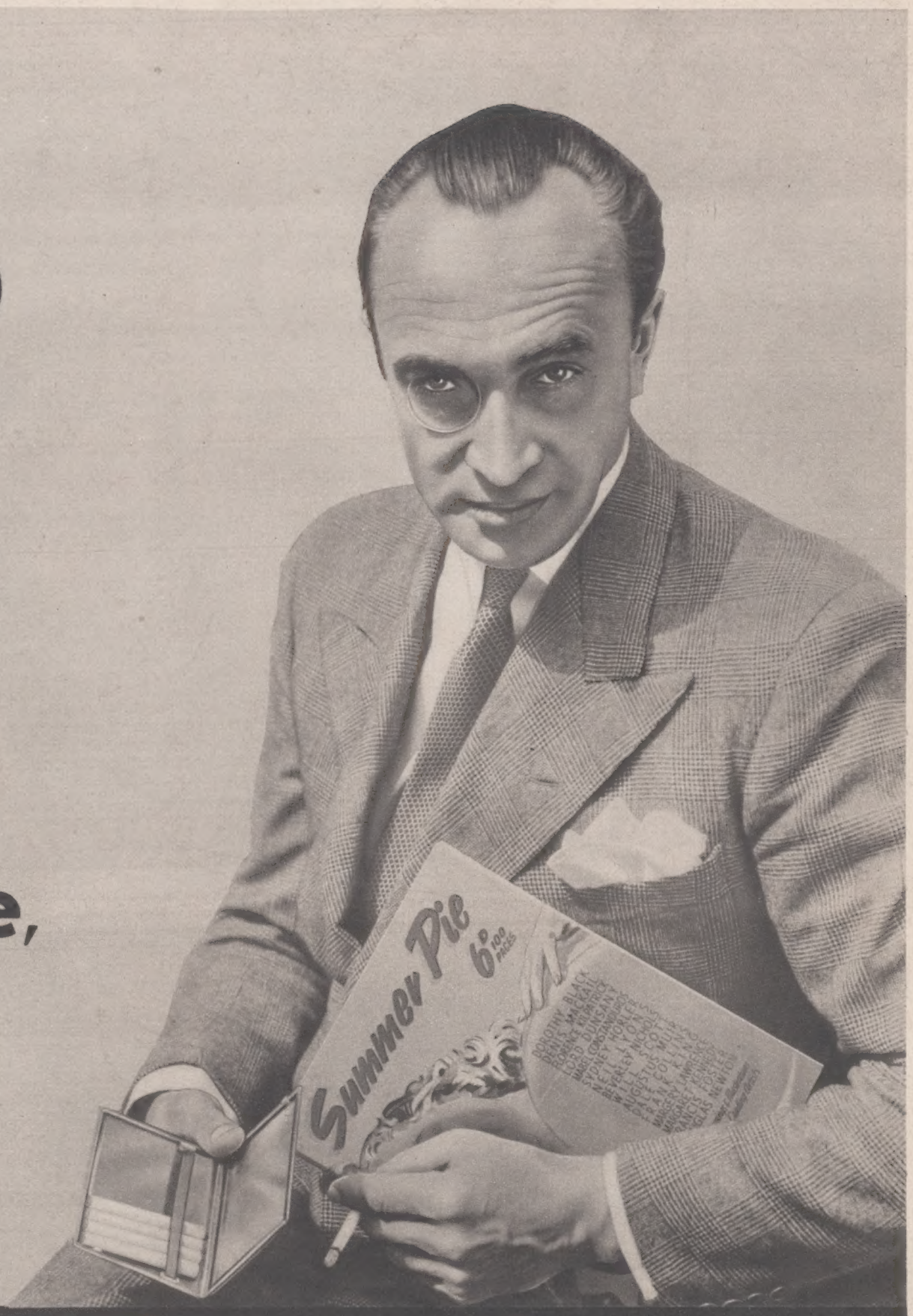

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